

# Common Ground

## The Tools for Ethnic Democracy

Ward Shepard

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THE CONDITIONS OF ENDURING PEACE

Arthur E. Morgan

MAIDS OF THE MISSOURI Leon Z. Surmelian

SOUTHERN DEFENSIVE — I J. Saunders Redding  
— II Lillian E. Smith

TWO WORLDS Alphonse Henningburg

THE ARTIST AND THE WAR Yasuo Kuniyoshi

GETTING QUICK RICH

George and Helen Papashvily

— *and others* —

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## THE TOOLS FOR ETHNIC DEMOCRACY

WARD SHEPARD

THE LACK of social imagination and social invention in America between 1789 and 1861 precipitated the slavery question into an all but fatal civil war. Failing to profit by the lessons of that long era of anemic statesmanship and feeble compromise, we have allowed racial minority persecution and oppression to drift into explosive violence and have allowed America, as Arnold Toynbee warns in his superb *Study of History*, to enter the incipient stages of a paralyzing caste system.

In the Autumn 1943 issue of this magazine, John Collier and Saul K. Padover suggested that America needs an Institute of Ethnic Democracy to deal courageously and honestly with this dangerous and destructive evil. This proposal merits a more rigorous and searching examination than it has yet evoked. For the problem of racial discrimination does not present us with any comfortable alternatives, any rosy path of escape from brutal reality. Either we shall conquer racial oppression or racial oppression will destroy us. "A nation can not endure half slave and half free," whether the slavery is legal, formal, and absolute, or relative, informal, and subtle.

An honest and sober confrontation of the race issue demands a drastic revision of our easy complacency with our unfin-

ished business of democracy. "We must disenthral ourselves," said Lincoln, "and then we shall save our country." We must disenthral ourselves of the illusion that racial oppression is merely a venial, instead of a mortal, sin. And we must disenthral ourselves from our naive and nihilistic superstition, dominant in political thinking for two centuries, that social evils right themselves by the figment of "beneficent natural laws" instead of by positive social action.

I propose—I hope with some rigor—to explore this field of social invention to see if we can disenthral ourselves and reduce the principle of an Institute of Ethnic Democracy to an operational hypothesis. If we can do this, the exploration will have the advantage of helping to shift debate to *how* instead of holding it on *whether*. But exploration itself is fruitless unless we start with a hypothesis. My hypothesis is (1) that national governmental action on the race issue is not only appropriate but imperative; and (2) that governmental action, by skillful invention, can steer clear of the typical evils of centralized bureaucracy and channel the abundant good forces of our people into effective popular action against racial oppression.

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Why is racial oppression an imperative for national action? We merely deceive ourselves when we imagine our real interest in this problem is confined to a sentimental and humanitarian will to relieve the pain, deprivation, humiliation, and degradation of the oppressed. Our real interest lies in the fact that a system of freedom can not be erected on a system of caste. Discrimination and democracy are absolutely antithetical terms. "By freeing the slave," said Lincoln, with profound insight, "we assure freedom to the free." The obverse of this truth is that oppression of the weak undermines and destroys the freedom of the free. The brutality of minority oppression brutalizes the free more than it brutalizes the oppressed, and by brutalizing the free, it blunts the moral sense that is the foundation of freedom. An ultimate truth of freedom is that no man is morally fit to govern other men without their consent, because irresponsible power inescapably corrupts those who use it. Free peoples can not afford the dangerous luxury of minority oppression. Let us be content to leave that debilitating vice to the "strong" "master" races.

This is not mere abstract philosophizing. The most ruinous result of the prolonged slavery debate was the intellectual and moral perversion it bred among all but a handful of leading statesmen, North and South. The casualness of most of our people, and the arrogant brutality of not a few, toward our interned Japanese American fellow-citizens argues an ethical and perceptive blunting of fine feeling, which in turn stems out of the contempt bred by familiarity with many racial oppressions in our midst. It is no secret that the corrupting effect of the poll-tax issue spread over into the threatened disfranchisement of the ten million of our best and bravest upon whose bullets and ballots human liberty everywhere, now and for long, so much depends. The sadism of the Nazi

hordes, first feeding on the Jews, spread with virulent malignity to embrace in its cancerous tentacles anyone who was merely weak and defenseless. This disease of oppression grows by what it feeds on and can flare into violent malignity at any place and any moment. A cancer is not benignant merely because it is small.

The national interest in destroying oppression is not merely internal. The corrupting effect of the race issue is international. The slave issue came within an ace of involving us in a fatal war with England at the crisis of the Civil War. Our Oriental exclusion acts were a contributing factor to the war with Japan and have been sedulously used to promote race war between the white and yellow races. The race issue in India threatens both civil war and the disruption of the British Empire. Next to the crushing of Nazism, fascism, and militarism, freedom for "backward" (and oppressed) races and groups is the greatest issue of this war. We can not exert our moral authority to this end until we clean our own house. We can not create an effective international co-operation for peace unless racial oppression ceases as a world disease. For that disease contains the germs, dormant or active, of fratricidal internal strife and of annihilating race wars.

In any view of government short of futilitarianism and nihilism, we must agree that free government by its very nature must curb the forces that destroy freedom. Otherwise, we are enmeshed in a fatal paradox: Through a false principle of freedom we first undermine and then destroy the principal instrument of freedom, free government. If we are going to confront the evil of racial oppression, let us disenfranchise ourselves from this paradox.

## II

If we are to cope with the corroding and destroying evils that have beset our civilization, we must also free ourselves of our

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thralldom to the fatally false and still dominant political dogmas of the 18th century "enlightenment." Every social reform confronts and must battle with the inherited superstition that impregnates economics, politics, science, and morals alike—that the uncontrolled activities of men, by some miracle of "natural" design, automatically create the good society, into which, without discipline or struggle, we are effortlessly moving down the rosy path of linear progress.

Under this systematized nihilism of the Western World, we have witnessed the growth of unemployment, poverty, hunger, ignorance, oppression, and corruption to a degree where, within one generation, the world blew up in two world wars and an annihilating world depression. These events have rolled over and well-nigh crushed civilization without producing any noticeable effect on the advocates and practitioners of political nihilism. Yet it is as clear as crystal that no government and no social order that is incapable of dealing with the destructive emergent realities of an imperilled civilization has the ghost of a chance to survive. And most of these destructive realities are oppressions—economic, political, social, religious, and racial. The history of democracy, as Whitman said, "remains unwritten" because human freedom must be systematically and positively organized by conscious will and purpose.

Our unfinished democratic societies, to be sure, have not gone very far in inventing ways to deal with the destructive realities which make human freedom a half-realized and uneasy dream. But we shall be futile and cowardly if we allow our unfinished democracy to perish miserably from the earth while we bicker over such barren platitudes as "bureaucracy," "states rights," "individualism," "progress," and "natural law." If the history of the past 25 years means anything, it means that

man has an almost infinite plasticity and malleability, for good or for evil. We can create a society that is permeated with mutuality and co-operation or with hatred and terrorism. Shall we go forward and invent the conditions of a good society, or shall we destroy ourselves while we bicker over dead symbols?

We need political invention that will supplant the doctrine of nihilism with the doctrine of dynamic social design. In the United States, nihilism and do-nothingism have prolonged their life through the artificial conflict between federalism and states rights. We need a workable political doctrine and practice that will bridge this gap. For true democracy is antithetical both to bureaucratic centralization and to localized futility. Any government that attempts through authoritarian bureaucracy, however skillful, to rise above the capacity of its people for genuine self-government can in the long run maintain itself only by force. At the other end, localized futilitarianism and do-nothingism in government destroy the public and civic virtues on which freedom rests, condemn the people to a sterile, shallow, and selfish materialism, and breed malignant social growths.

The modern trend toward "federalism" is largely due to the failure of the states to meet their obligations. If federal union is to work, we must enforce the principle that the states have rights and responsibilities; and we must furthermore enforce the principle that in matters affecting the national interest, the federal government has not only the right and the power, but the duty to see that our national responsibilities are met either by federal or state action or by a combination of both.

The die-hard anti-federalists and states-righters do not accept this doctrine. In denying it, they deny both the historical purpose and the organic nature of the federal Constitution. What they argue for is

not the Constitution but the Articles of Confederation. What is more, if they should have their way, they would reduce our federal union to a mere confederation. At the other extreme, the federal centralizers are victims of the almost worldwide delusion that government is an essentially mechanistic engineering enterprise in which great masses of people can be managed, propagandized, planned, and fuhrered into prosperity, happiness, and peace.

If we substitute for this conflict of extremes the concept of partnership and co-operation, we can see that much of the conflict between federalism and states rights, between nationalism and localism, is artificial and unnatural. If we admit that the very core of our Constitution is its creation of a national mechanism empowered and obligated to deal with matters affecting the national interest, if we grasp the fact that effective government must evoke and stimulate the latent powers of the people themselves to intensify and direct and multiply their life-activity, then we can devise a formula for real instead of pseudo-democratic government: namely, federal "framework" laws which define certain policies, goals, standards, and forms of assistance coupled with state operational laws, which flexibly apply the federal framework law to infinitely diverse local conditions.

It is in this field of dynamic federal-state co-operation that we have the best chance to combat both nihilism and bureaucratic hierarchalism with dynamic democracy. It is here that we must explore the possibilities of focusing the goodwill of our people on the evil of racial discrimination. Fortunately we are not without illuminating precedents; for already, in recent years, America has done some brilliant pioneering in this no-man's land of dynamic democracy.

### III

Let us explore some living examples of these new inventions to see if we can deduce any principles that are applicable to an Institute of Ethnic Democracy. I take five diverse examples to illustrate, first, various mechanisms of bridging the gap between nationalism and localism on a dynamic pattern and, second, various ways and degrees of evoking and fusing human energy.

*Example I.* The Social Security Act illustrates, in a fairly simple and relatively non-controversial field, a successful method of combining, or, if you prefer, distributing power between the federal and state governments. The problem was to bring old-age and other types of assistance to the people as a whole, without discrimination. The federal Social Security Board was therefore empowered to give financial assistance to the states provided the states passed laws meeting certain standards laid down in the federal act. Some of the important standards were that the state must create or designate a single agency to administer the law, that the social insurance system must be mandatory and state-wide, that no citizen of the United States should be ineligible to the rights defined in the federal act, and that any citizen deprived of his rights could appeal to the courts.

There is also an exceedingly important element of popular participation inherent in the federal act. The revenue to finance the federal government's contribution to old-age and unemployment compensation is a tax on wages, which involved the consent of the people to invoke what Churchill has called "the magic of averages" in a co-operative pooling of resources to relieve distress.

The Social Security Board has three very important powers beyond administering the federal contribution: it passes on the adequacy of state law and administra-

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tion, it hears appeals from aggrieved citizens, and it studies and makes recommendations to Congress and to the states on the most effective methods of social security.

In this relatively simple field (simple because its essence is merely applying sound actuarial principles to the pooling of resources), order emerged from chaos because intelligent federal action precipitated dynamic state action under a system of flexible and localized uniformity. It is to be observed also that this is a field amenable to straight bureaucratic administration.

*Example II.* Let us proceed to a more difficult field, requiring a much greater degree of popular participation and a much more difficult shift of personal behavior, namely, the soil conservation districts. The dynamics of this striking popular movement is something much more powerful and complex than a government bureau "spreading the light" to millions of people. The self-governing soil conservation districts, created by the popular vote of the land-users under state laws precisely defining their form, powers, and duties as legal bodies-politic, are thoroughly democratic mechanisms of co-operative action in a field in which purely individual action is almost powerless.

This particular social construct released and focused an enormous, latent, unused energy. The technologies of "conservation farming" have an organic and esthetic completeness that constitute the most far-reaching and the most exciting revolution in agriculture since primitive man's domestication of food plants. The flocking of millions of farmers to this revolutionary change clearly shows that ordinary, average people can do and are eager to do a far better job in creating a genuine civilization and culture than the general run of technicians, administrators, legislators,

educators, and scientists are willing or even able to let them do. In this age of great knowledge and little wisdom, we are still socially and politically in the horse-and- buggy stage because the majority of the leaders themselves are so largely incapable of the kind of social invention that will release and enlarge the illimitable creative powers of mankind. And in the last analysis this is the oppression of all oppressions.

Here state action was induced (a) by a series of several hundred large-scale demonstrations established in all parts of the country by the Soil Conservation Service and (b) by the drafting of a model state soil conservation district act, which was sent by the President to all the Governors and has been enacted by 46 state legislatures. There is no corresponding federal "framework" law; the Soil Conservation Service is merely authorized to co-operate with farmers. Unquestionably, however, a framework law will come, since no government, in the long run, dare tolerate the destruction of the soil, the ultimate basis of civilization itself. Such a framework law will undoubtedly precipitate a sharp conflict over property rights. This great enterprise is non-bureaucratic, in that the Soil Conservation Service stands in a purely advisory and assisting relation to the self-governing districts.

*Example III.* Let us examine a much more controversial field and a very different type of social energization. A spectacular and important episode in the history of liberty is the growth of the labor movement in America in the past 10 years. This dynamic movement was precipitated under the formula of federalism-localism sketched above. Federal framework law made it not only possible but imperative for workers to organize for collective bargaining. The National Labor Relations Act defined the rights of workers, prevented interference by employers to thwart these human rights,

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and set up juridical machinery to adjudicate them. This is a striking example both of the potency of federal "framework" legislation in releasing human energy and of the soundness of the partnership of federalism and localism. Here the most effective and powerful mechanism—the labor union—is not only non-federal, it is non-state. The labor union was transformed into a quasi-public instrumentality of economic liberty far more potent for human good than a politically or bureaucratically dominated instrumentality could be. The federal government, to be sure, retains certain decisive powers of mediation and adjudication, on the ground that courts, which safeguard both private and public rights, must by their very nature be public institutions.

The Act creating the National Labor Relations Board is a classic of philosophy, lucidity, brevity, and power. Its all-important preamble asserts, in effect, that workers do not in fact have "freedom of contract" unless they have freedom of collective action. By declaring that this lack of freedom causes strikes and other interruptions of interstate commerce, it lays the constitutional foundation for federal intervention. The Act defines unfair practices both by employers and employees, and it makes the decisions of the National Labor Relations Board enforceable through the courts, subject of course to the right of appeal.

But where does the state come in? A part of the answer is that the Labor Relations Act, in effect, transforms the labor union into an instrumentality of government. It ceases to be a private association and becomes a public body clothed with specific power and responsibility devolved on it by the government. This transformation represents an enlargement of liberty from the political to the economic sphere. This formal empowering of corporate groups to assume social responsibilities is

widely applicable to modern society. It is, in fact, perhaps the most important clue to freeing man from fascistic bureaucratization and still more for evoking ever-renewed social energies.

But realism also forces us to confront the rest of the answer as to why the federal government failed, in this instance, to act through the states. In extremely controversial fields, reliance on state action might long postpone or even nullify action in a crisis. And it is to be observed that, in any event, the federal government, under the Constitution, has reserved powers which it may use as it will. Beyond that is the fact that the great labor organizations are national corporate bodies; obviously adjudication of their rights by 48 state governments would be fantastically complicated.

*Example IV.* I come now to a comparatively diminutive field which nevertheless is highly significant both as mechanism and as evocation of latent powers. For a century the Indians of the United States came under the more and more authoritarian power of the Office of Indian Affairs, whose policy was in essence to destroy Indian social organization and cultural tradition. This policy was successful to the point where the Indians, both as individuals and as tribes, had largely ceased to function as normal human beings and societies. The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 sought to break this destructive and disintegrating policy by recognizing and implementing the inherent right of the Indians to self-government both political and economic. With their unused powers thus released, the Indians have been undergoing a remarkable renaissance of creative energy, cultural, social, and economic, the clue to which is the self-reintegration of disintegrated powers and personalities. Here again the empowering of a corporate group for self-activity is the

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decisive factor, as it is in the labor movement, and here again direct federal intervention side-stepped the states primarily because the states, by and large, are not yet morally prepared to grant freedom and equality to the Indians. However, in important matters, the organized tribes are empowered to enter into contractual relations with local subdivisions of government.

*Example V.* Finally, let us consider an oppressed minority of more formidable dimensions—the tenant farmers and sharecroppers. From our early ideal of free homesteaders, our agrarian policy had so degenerated that by 1933 forty-three per cent of all our farmers were tenants. The system of tenantry and share-cropping has been responsible for degrading its human victims; and it has also been a potent factor in deteriorating and destroying our soils, since it breeds irresponsibility both in absentee landlords and in their transitory tenants. The Farm Security Administration was created to attack this ominous social evil of a rootless rural proletariat. To date it has “rehabilitated” about one million clients. Its method is a classic of simplicity and success. It makes low interest loans coupled with a contractual provision by which the client agrees to follow scientific farming methods worked out in agreement with Farm Security experts. The brilliant success of this feat of social engineering is clearly proved by three things—the high rate of loan repayment, the extraordinary psychic as well as economic rehabilitation of Farm Security clients, and the amazing record of war food production made by these small farmers released from peonage. On the basis of this record the recent attacks on the Farm Security Administration can only be motivated by a desire to keep our “poor white trash” “in that station to which God in His infinite wisdom assigned them.”

We are now able to derive certain principles from these inventions that will illuminate the operating principles of an Institute of Ethnic Democracy.

In a relatively simple field, like social security, where there is a maximum of agreement, a federal formulation of standards coupled with adequate incentives is capable of obtaining national action through the states with flexible uniformity. Here a straight bureaucratic administration—federal and local—is not only feasible but necessary, since it involves precise fiscal and actuarial operations and no change in human behavior beyond what the majority readily assents to—here a pooling of resources for insurance.

As we approach significant changes in human behavior, the type of instrumentality must be different. Sharp changes produce emotional resistance, the changes require both education and incentive, and the chosen instrumentality must offer both. In the case of the revolutionary change in agriculture involved in soil conservation, the “education” consisted of (a) large scale demonstrations and (b) the making and execution of precise farm management plans by the technicians and the farmers. Emotional resistance was merely the resistance of habit. The incentives were economic gain and intellectual and esthetic stimulation.

Even stronger emotional resistance is encountered when change of behavior also attacks vested interests either of property or power. Enemies of the Farm Security Administration find it lucrative to have a large reservoir of cheap labor in the tenant farmers. Dominant minorities disfranchise Negroes, poor whites, or Indians because they do not wish to surrender power. Employers resist collective bargaining because they resent interference with the authoritarian power system of industry. Bureaucrats enlarge their powers over people, if permitted, as in the old Indian Office,

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because they distrust the people. The oppression of "inferior" races bolsters the imaginary superiority with which we faintly civilized moderns vainly try to conceal the squalid and bloody mess we have made of our civilization.

Where important changes in behavior are involved, as in soil conservation, and where in addition highly controversial shifts of power are involved, as in organizing labor for collective bargaining or organizing Indians for self-government, important powers must be delegated by government itself to the people directly concerned. In the last analysis, people must work out their own salvation. Government intervention consists in creating mechanisms through which the people can save themselves.

Moreover, where oppressed groups are involved, such as unorganized workers or Indians or tenant farmers, the federal government must intervene as mediator and protector. This intervention can, be through the states if they are prepared to act effectively, and, if not, the intervention can be direct and authoritative. Here the function of government is not primarily administrative in the sense of operating a precise system. It is rather judicial and protective. The protection consists in legally defining rights and enforcing those rights or granting privileges and effectuating those privileges. Judicial mediation consists in direct intervention in conflicts.

Finally, in these very diverse examples, federal action, based on the principles of flexible uniformity, has brought dynamic order out of the chaos of drift and nothingness. In the case of soil conservation and Indian self-government, it energized purely local and entirely voluntary groups. In social security, it energized the states as well as the popular will to pool resources for insurance. In labor, it energized the workers and transformed them into powerful instrumentalities of social

and economic justice. In farm security, it energized a great class of semi-peons into highly competent free-holding farmers.

These enterprises, in themselves, expose the flaccid futility of laissez faire by their brilliant projection of dynamic instruments of modern democracy. Essentially, these instruments perform the function of fusing individual will and purpose into a common will and purpose. The most surprising thing about them is the relatively small amount of energy (i.e. federal leadership) required to do this. It is as if the will and purpose were there, all the time, latent and unused, waiting only for a spark to light it into a great flame. In fact, the leaving of these latent spiritual energies dormant is the principal reason the world has been rotting away into chaotic "depression," demonic fascism, and annihilating war. For here is the principal source of that "static corruption" immanent in modern civilization which Reinhold Niebuhr rightly says is more dangerous to civilization than its virulent manifestation in Hitlerism. Instead of delivering man bound and shackled to the merciless play of fictitious "natural laws," instead of sentimentally yearning that "somehow good will be the final goal of ill" if only the ills are sufficiently numerous and conflicting, let us grasp the ultimate truth that human society is largely a psychic construct amenable over a vast area of creative freedom to "laws" that emanate from the creative human psyche. Let us disenthral ourselves from the lethal lethargy that has enervated our civilization to the verge of death.

## IV

We can now apply these precedents and principles to the field of race relations. The function of an Institute of Ethnic Democracy would be to fuse common will and purpose into social action that would

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strive for justice, equality, freedom, and equal opportunity for oppressed ethnic minorities. But whether it could effectively discharge that function would depend, first, on the existence of any common will and purpose to draw on, and, secondly, on whether the subject-matter of race relations is amenable to some type of organized effort that might canalize whatever common will and purpose we may discover to exist.

As to common will and purpose, we have, first of all, our high tradition of idealism, decency, and fair play, and our heritage of faith in "government of the people, by the people, for the people." There is no question whatsoever that the great majority of the American people accept these ideals. This is not a matter of opinion but of history. America fought one of the bloodiest and most destructive wars in history to settle the slavery question. I have given above striking modern instances in which injustices have been corrected and American ideals enforced through adequate mechanisms of social action before these injustices precipitated irremediable conflicts. In any given field of injustice or oppression, so long as the idealistic majority fails to create adequate means for enforcing its faith, it is at the mercy of ignorant, vicious, venal, and destructive groups and individuals who promote their "interests" or justify their arrogance by persecuting the weak and thus generate destructive forces of explosive violence.

We have powerful groups, like the churches, and organized civic groups, devoted to high ethical ideals whose powers can be multiplied if they are brought together under a united purpose.

We have also a wide array of public welfare agencies whose energies can be canalized into bringing oppressed ethnic groups a fair share of the services of modern civilization—education, housing, medical aid,

economic betterment, and the cultivation of talent and culture.

We have Congress and the state legislatures, which can ameliorate and remove statutory and other discriminations and by legislation promote welfare programs.

We have the courts and the agencies of law enforcement, which can be stiffened into enforcing constitutional rights and protective statutes.

Finally, we have the racial minorities themselves. They have a moral obligation to share actively in their own protection and advancement. But they have an even stronger moral obligation. The very existence of democracy hinges on our ability to obliterate the incipient caste system that is taking root in our midst. The minorities, more than any other members of our democratic society, therefore, have very high stakes in helping us all to realize the full power and greatness of a completely democratized America.

Before considering the precise form and functions of an Institute of Ethnic Democracy whose purpose would be to fuse these diverse groups behind a general movement for better race relations, let us first consider the nature of the subject matter that would confront it.

Granting that there is abundant goodwill to be drawn on, let us consider the actual nature of race discrimination, to determine whether it lends itself to action through concrete social instrumentalities that can gather up, fuse, and focus the now amorphous, nebulous, diffused common will to removing or ameliorating discriminations and oppressions. Here it will be helpful to segregate the subject-matter into two categories—specific discriminations and oppressions, and the more pervasive hostilities that take the form of antagonism, dislike, contempt, or the superstition of innate superiority of one race over another.

Among numerous specific discrimina-

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tions, we can cite legislative discrimination such as the disfranchisement of Indians and Negroes, anti-alien land and marriage laws, Jim Crow laws, and the Oriental exclusion acts; certain industrial and labor policies such as debarring Jews and Negroes from labor unions or employment opportunities; organized dissemination of discriminatory ideas and attitudes through such agencies as the Ku Klux Klan, our proto-fascists, and our anti-Semitic literature. Obviously, legislative discriminations are subject to amelioration through repeal; employment and labor discriminations are subject to amelioration by defining and enforcing fair racial practices (through amending the National Labor Relations Act, for example); and finally organized provocation, such as that of the Ku Klux Klan or anti-Semitic literature, can be dealt with by tightening up our laws pertaining to sedition. There is a peculiarly flaccid school of "liberalism" which regards interference with even the most brutal expressions of hatred and contempt for racial minorities as an interference with "freedom of speech." Yet if acts of verbal provocation disturb the peace and security, they should be amenable to the same kind of treatment as libel, slander, and verbal assault. In these various suggestions for ameliorative action, I am temporarily disregarding the serious obstacles to such action, but will return to them in discussing methods of action.

Other types of specific discrimination may be summarized as exclusion from a fair share of the social services that are theoretically available to all citizens and even to aliens who have come to America as the land of opportunity. Many groups or individual members of groups have been excluded from agricultural credit and technical advice, from adequate educational facilities, medical service, housing programs, employment opportunities, and the like. These inequalities can be correct-

ed either by legislation or by policy changes in federal and state welfare agencies. Thus the Farm Security Administration has had some exceedingly successful co-operative farm enterprises among Negroes. It has had extraordinary success in stimulating rural group medicine. The Indian Service has provided admirable medical and educational services for the Indians, has developed a successful system of Indian credit, has stimulated the formation of many successful Indian co-operatives, especially in livestock raising, and has made some progress in the higher education of Indians for civic, administrative, and technical service to their own people. The equalization of such social services among underprivileged groups carries no stigma of special privilege or "wardship": it is merely a recognition of the inherent right of all our citizens to equality of opportunity in practice as well as in theory. This field of positive welfare, including adequate opportunities for higher education for leadership, is perhaps the most promising and tangible aspect of race relations to deal with, since it strongly appeals to the practical idealism of the American people.

When we approach the more diffused and intangible manifestations, such as hostility, suspicion, contempt, and arrogance, we are dealing with an even more difficult subject than concrete discriminations. Here I make two general observations. One is that progress in the concrete ameliorations suggested above will in itself require, and will be, an immense "educational" effort; and will tend to focus public opinion on fomenters and propagators of race hostility and make them socially unpopular. The second is that these diffuse and intangible feelings of race hostility can be directly attacked by educational methods. The myth of racial superiority can be destroyed only by a long and determined attack. In this attack, one of the decisive

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elements will be the creative contributions of the minorities themselves as their creative talents develop through organized freedom.

Finally, there is the field of interracial tension zones, where the sum of tangible discriminations and intangible hostilities precipitate or threaten to precipitate overt conflicts, such as the recent race riots in Los Angeles, Detroit, and New York, and the persecution of Jewish children in Boston and New York. These tension zones are subject to several lines of action, including investigation to determine the causes of hostility, mediation to remove the causes, law enforcement against agitators and provocateurs, and the rousing of community opinion.

### V

It thus seems clear that both specific racial discriminations and inequalities and the less tangible racial antagonisms that underlie these injustices are capable of being constructively handled by organized effort. It is equally clear that there are abundant forces of goodwill and idealistic purpose that are waiting to be fused and crystallized into interracial co-operation provided we can discover and effect the methods of fusion and crystallization.

The national interests at stake and the power and duty of the federal government to enforce the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, are alone sufficient warrant for federal intervention. If to these reasons, we add the striking success of the five examples of federal legislation cited above in turning chaos into order and in making latent national energy dynamic, the argument for federal intervention is, I think, unanswerable.

But the nature of race discrimination equally strongly dictates that the programs of amelioration be worked out (with some reservations) through federal co-operation

with the states rather than directly through federal action. We are not dealing with national corporate bodies like the great labor unions whose rights can be specifically defined and adjudicated. We are dealing with an intricate complex of attitudes, folkways, customs, prejudices, inhibitions, emotions, and institutionalized discriminations. Many, in fact most, overt manifestations of discrimination are more or less uniquely localized. The latent opinion that must be roused and the behavior patterns that must be changed are the opinions and behavior of people who are all deeply involved in these highly localized and variable manifestations of racial antagonism. Consequently, we need local institutionalized action analogous to that employed in the soil conservation districts or Indian reorganization, the purpose of which was to fuse and energize common will and purpose to deal with unique local problems requiring extensive changes of behavior.

It follows that one main function of a federal Institute would be to assist the states and local communities in developing institutions and movements capable of dealing with local problems of race discrimination. But the federal Institute would also be compelled to deal directly with certain aspects of race discrimination that are clearly a function of the federal government.

Before considering the form of the federal, state, and local institutions required by the nature of the race problem, it will be helpful to visualize their field of possible operations. In defining possible operations, we must recognize the fact that many of these operations, in actual practice, will encounter grave obstacles. No miracle of organization can swiftly change deep-seated habits and prejudices. The most we can do is to set up an intelligent process with clearly defined goals. The process will be gradual, it will be highly

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variable as to time and place; but the defined goals should nevertheless be courageously broad and far-reaching. We need not be ashamed of freedom, or of our failures and difficulties in the course of achieving it.

The least controversial function of the Institute would be *the function of research and education*—research to elicit the facts of race relations and to formulate scientific methods of dealing with them; education to rouse public opinion and focus it on desirable goals. The federal Institute could directly carry out a part of these functions, and it could co-operatively farm out many of them on a contractual basis to state and local affiliates, to universities, foundations, and other agencies.

A second function is the *redefinition and enforcement of legal and constitutional rights*. So far as the federal Constitution and statutes are concerned, the federal government has the power and duty of enforcing equality of rights and treatment. The federal Institute could, for example, be empowered to report violation of rights to the Department of Justice; that Department could, in turn, be empowered to call on the Institute for investigation and advice. Obviously, also, the federal Institute could assist state and local law enforcement agencies in a similar way.

There is the *function of mediation*, with Congress and the state legislatures to remove discriminatory legislation and enact welfare legislation; with labor unions and employers to promote fair employment practices; and with civic and group leaders in tension zones to alleviate conflicts.

There is the *function of welfare planning*, the purpose of which would be to engage the assistance of federal, state, and local welfare agencies (chiefly governmental) in a fairer apportionment of the social services to racial minorities.

There is the *function of organization*—

of seeking to correlate the activities of existing groups interested in race relations and stimulating modes of expression for latent goodwill. Obviously, organized minority groups have a special responsibility for expressing the needs and views of their members.

It is clear from this definition of functions that a federal Institute and its state and local affiliates can have no such sharply defined and routinized duties as those, for example, of the Social Security Board, the Bureau of Public Roads, or the Reclamation Service. Its main function is *mediation*—mediation of conflicts, mediation of discriminatory legislation, mediation of welfare programs, mediation of law enforcement. If it is argued that existing agencies can perform these functions without creating a new mediating agency, the answer is that the urgency of racial conflict and discrimination demands a sharp focusing of public policy and public opinion on this area of conflict and discrimination; that this focusing requires the creation of a dynamic instrument to that end; and that this instrument itself can perform a unique catalytic task in helping to redirect and fuse the energies of many existing agencies.

This function of mediation dictates a board or commission rather than a straight bureaucracy as the best form for an Institute. This board might be analogous in structure to the National Labor Relations Board or the Social Security Board. Or, perhaps, better, it could be representative of the main agencies that need to be drawn together for an effective attack—namely, Congress, the main federal welfare agencies, the Governors of the states, and the minority groups. The board, in either form, would be essentially a policy and strategy board, whose policies and strategies would be carried out by a permanent secretariat.

The corresponding state agency could

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be similarly constituted. In local communities, there could be either temporary or permanent boards, depending on the nature of the problem to be handled. A permanent board would be necessary where there are deep-seated causes of friction. On the other hand, temporary boards or "panels" could be set up to adjudicate specific disputes, such as the location of a Negro housing project, or race discrimination in a local labor union or industry.

How could a federal Institute induce the states to set up and operate such boards? It could offer financial aids (either directly or on behalf of a federal welfare agency such as the Public Health Service), and it could offer various expert services in investigation, mediation, advice, education, and welfare planning. The federal Institute could also be empowered to intervene directly in local situations affecting the national welfare if the states failed to take an effective initiative.

I suggest that the next step toward the creation of a federal Institute of Ethnic Democracy would be the actual drafting of a proposed federal statute and a model state law which would explicitly define the functions, powers, responsibilities, and interrelations of these agencies. The federal statute should contain a strong declaration of the findings and intent of the Congress, to the effect that race discriminations abrogate the constitutional rights of citizens and set up destructive tensions in the social order, and that it is the intention of Congress to enforce the Constitution, in co-operation with the states if possible and otherwise independently, and to promote economic, cultural, and human equality of all our citizens regardless of race.

The actual drafting of these proposed statutes would, I think, do more than anything else to draw this subject down out of the clouds of theoretical controversy onto the plane of practical reality, and it

would, I am convinced, reveal the full possibility and potency of organizing better race relations round the federal-state co-operative formula of flexible uniformity that has been so dynamically successful in so many difficult fields of human endeavor.

## VI

An honest confrontation of the destructive racial conflicts in our midst thus compels us to admit that, if we are to get anywhere, we *must devise means that are adequate to our ends*. It is quite clear that a program of pure research and propagandistic education is incapable of solving a problem as complex as that of race discrimination, any more than it is capable of solving the problem of collective bargaining or soil erosion. "Research" and "education" have become time-honored, though badly tarnished, catchwords which we fall back on when we are baffled by a knotty problem that seemingly evades solution; and even though the "education" be diffuse, sentimental, and undirected, and the "research" be lost on library shelves, we salve our consciences with the delusion we have done our best.

On the other hand, we have reached the stage in civilization where government can no longer operate successfully unless it fully uses the tools of research as the basis of action. The dichotomy between "practical" administrators and "pure" scientists is one of the dangerous rifts in modern social organization. It is comfortable for the practical administrator, since it relieves him of the pain of intellectual discipline, and it is comfortable for the pure scientist, since it permits him to dwell peaceably in his ivory tower far from the madding crowd. This rift must be bridged. It can be bridged only if social scientists form a working partnership with administrators in order to bring science to bear on such seemingly baffling problems as race relations.

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In more specific terms, research in race relations could well begin on concrete situations and tensions demanding the intervention of the agencies sketched above. It would develop its methodology as it went along. It would seek immediate proximate answers to immediate complex situations. From these sketchy beginnings, it would widen and deepen its search. It would seek out not merely the intrinsic subject-matter of race relations, but the methods of dealing with them, and it would thus achieve that rarity in the domain of political and social action—competent critical self-analysis.

This is not a mere theory of research. I cite two instances. When the Soil Conservation Service started its great work in 1933, there existed no body of research and experience remotely capable of yielding the beautifully complex pattern of conservation farming. The bold and imaginative action that created this pattern by the cut-and-try principle forced research out of its ivory tower into the rough and tumble of elaborating and perfecting this pattern. In the field of armaments, the imperious necessities of military action have spurred research into an immense creative activity. Social research also will be enormously vitalized and fructified as it gears itself into concrete social action.

Likewise "education" in race relations, instead of being generalized, sentimental, and propagandistic, can center on public enlightenment in concrete, amenable situations, and, growing by what it feeds on, extend its effective domain into the more pervasive and less tangible fields of race antagonisms. Hitched to concrete ameliorative actions, education is a necessary and powerful tool, whereas an abstract and sentimental love of our fellow-man heals no wounds and assuages no pains.

The argument for democratic localism also argues against the bureaucratic centralization of research and education in

the Institute itself. It could farm out many of these functions to co-operating agencies, such as universities and foundations. But the need for decentralization does not argue for incoherence. In stimulating research through grants-in-aid, it could not only point research to specific goals, but could integrate research under a systematic plan democratically arrived at by the co-operating groups, whose outlines, as they were filled in, would make an organic and comprehensive body of knowledge on race relations.

The foregoing discussion is exploratory and does not pretend to be a categorical prescription of the precise form and functions of an Institute of Ethnic Democracy. I do contend, however, that the basic principle I have proposed is sound and actionable. That principle is that government can incorporate, empower, and vitalize non-bureaucratic instrumentalities of social advancement. In this particular case, the groups we wish to incorporate, empower, and vitalize are the minority groups and that numerous majority of Americans who wish to apply to our minorities our high tradition of decency, goodwill, sympathy, fair play, and idealism. And by creating a catalytic agency (namely, the Institute and its state and local collaborating agencies), we can precipitate these now amorphous elements of goodwill into a powerful compound of social activation.

We must recognize what may be two strong objections of minorities themselves to a federally organized but co-operative Institute of Ethnic Democracy. One is that a special agency to deal with minority problems will, of itself, stigmatize the minorities as minorities and tend to a permanent minority status. That fear might be valid if it were proposed to create a managerial bureaucracy. But what I propose is something entirely different. It has no "managerial" functions. Its pur-

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pose is to organize and stimulate intelligent group opinion and action, including that of the minorities themselves, in order to remove the obstacles that block minority freedom. No one can rightly say that labor organization for collective bargaining stigmatizes labor as a permanent minority. On the contrary, it emancipates and powerfully reinforces the demand of workers for economic freedom. Likewise we do not alter the hard existential fact of minority status merely by failing to give it a name or to deal with it intelligently. Recognizing that *de facto* status frankly, we propose dynamic means to alter it to the point where it will cease to exist.

The other most likely objection by the minorities to the Institute will be that, once a special agency is created to deal with their problems, it will close their access to other avenues of progress. For example, it has been said that an Institute would negate the possibility of maintaining the hard-won gains of the "Black Cabinet," the group of Negroes who have occupied important advisory posts in the government during the war to protect Negroes against discriminations. On the contrary, the Institute, as I have outlined it, would do precisely the opposite. Its main function would be to intervene with governmental and non-governmental agencies to reinforce and extend all minority rights, including the right of adequate representation in government. Nor would such an Institute have either the power or the motive to block minority access to the avenues of advancement, governmental or otherwise. Its purpose in fact would be to help open and to keep

open all possible avenues of advancement. The Institute, I repeat, would be essentially a catalyzing agency. As such, its sole reason for existence would be to promote creative freedom.

Such an achievement might well be also an important pioneering step in the great task of which better race relations is only a part. That task is to make democracy a functioning reality rather than a theoretical hope. The world is in the grip of a Manichaeian struggle to determine whether man is a brutish machine or a free spirit. If, in this gigantic struggle, the "liberals" fail because they cling desperately to a set of badly worn and tarnished symbols, if they bog down in their own intellectual and ethical confusions, if they abandon the spirit of scientific and plastic experimentalism which created them, they too will be overwhelmed by the great neap tides that are sweeping mankind into a new historic destiny.

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## MAIDS OF THE MISSOURI

LEON Z. SURMELIAN

DURING my first dreadful year in college as a foreign student, I had steered clear of the coeds. But I began my second year with a Foreman and Clark suit I bought in Kansas City, and a greatly enlarged English vocabulary, full of American "pep." I used Stacomb on my hair, gargled my mouth with Listerine. I even bought a pipe, though I did not smoke, trying to look like one of those elegant gentlemen "Drawn from life at Fashion Park."

On Sundays, when I had been so bitterly lonely, I went to three or four different churches. I became a Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, Congregationalist, Roman Catholic. The Quill Club honored me with membership—after putting me through a medieval initiation ceremony with candles and black robes, and making me sign my name with an ancient quill on a roll of papyrus. But most of its members were professors; we met on intellectual ground, not social. Even dining in the home of the Vice-President on Christmas was nothing compared to a romance, or date, with a coed.

I was no longer a Spartan in my heart, but I still thought girls were for other boys. There were many girls in my chemistry class, and I was good in chemistry. In fact, I soon became storekeeper of the chemistry laboratories, a position of some responsibility. A chemistry laboratory smelled like my father's Old-World pharmacy, was redolent with the poignant odors of my childhood in Trebizond.

So I showed off in the chemistry lab-

oratory, helped students at my desk with their experiments. One of them, called Thackeray, claimed to be distantly related to the English novelist of the same name. That made him a person of importance in my eyes. But when I tried to read *Vanity Fair*, I gave it up, it was so dull. My new literary enthusiasms were Whitman, Longfellow, Emerson, Thoreau. I knew Carl Sandburg's "Chicago" by heart, with its slam-bang "Hog butcher of the world, tool maker, stacker of wheat."

Before long a miracle happened: a girl actually smiled at me—the most attractive and chic in my chemistry class. A luminous, luscious, generous smile. I would never have dared speak to her, but she came over to my desk and introduced herself.

"My name's Veta Morgan. I've been watching you. I wish you'd help me, too. These darn experiments! I hate chemistry I flunked this course last year, am repeating it."

As she spoke, she looked at me with candid, blue-green, liquid-light eyes, which shone with an inner rapture, as if the world were made for her to reign over as queen. With one glance she seemed to read the secret book of my life. Her hair coppery gold, she had the pure, intense grace of a flame. I noticed her jewelled sorority pin.

When I recovered my senses, I stammered I would be glad to help her. The year before, I would have been absolutely tongue-tied, would have broken into a

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sweat. Now I was able to go to her desk, talk with her. And soon we were like good friends. My hands were trembling, though, as I fastened a clamp and held her crucible over a Bunsen burner, explaining the chemical reaction that was taking place. If I could only describe the chemical reaction taking place in me!

I was overwhelmed when she said with characteristic frankness she liked my accent, she liked to hear me talk. "But don't you find English an awfully difficult language?" she asked. "I should imagine it would be very difficult for one not born to it. I'm taking French. Oh," she slapped



her forehead, "those irregular verbs!"

"English grammar is much more simple and logical than French," I replied, citing a few examples, trying to impress her with my knowledge. "What bothers me in English is the pronunciation. In French or Armenian, a vowel has always the same sound, and the accent is always on the

last syllable—but not in English! And then those little words like up, off, over, through, completely change the meaning of a verb or sentence." For a year I had been wrestling with the mighty English language, had read a pocket dictionary through, and treasured, like bright new coins, the new words and expressions I learned. I liked especially the short Anglo-Saxon words. English dropped from Veta's lips like pearls, rubies, and amethysts. There was a gleaming light in her every word, as she herself was full of light.

She asked me to coach her in French. It was the chance of a lifetime, but I glanced again with dismay at her sorority pin. She invited me to her sorority house, the Delta Delta Delta, and wanted to show me her paintings. She loved to paint, she said. But going to her sorority house to give her French lessons and see her paintings required far more courage and aplomb than I possessed. I mumbled excuses that I was too busy, was carrying twenty hours, perhaps later, some other time.

Yes, the gods were making amends for the misery I had suffered during my first year in America. Once, on this same Midwestern campus, I had been like a prisoner in Siberia.

With the words dropping from her lips like jewels, Veta told me she had some Indian blood in her, was from Oklahoma; she gave me the name of her home town. There was nothing about her to indicate her part Indian ancestry except a suggestion of primitive vitality and her high cheekbones, which gave her face its proud, aristocratic distinction. With Indian blood in her, she became doubly American to me.

From then on I could not take my eyes off her. She glowed in my consciousness every minute like a magnificent vision. And whenever she saw me looking at her, she gave me that luscious, generous smile.

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Pretending to be working out a chemical problem, I wrote a little poem:

*Maid of the Missouri,  
Sunrise on prairies,  
As fragrant and good  
As a basket of fruit.*

*Let us go and bathe  
With the Oklahoma moon  
In the wild Missouri,  
American houri.*

*And when you dry your hair  
Brighter than the moon's  
I'll play for you my oot,  
Or my shepherd's flute.*

(The oot is an Armenian guitar with a deeply mellow, passionate sound.)

Veta never read the poem. Nobody did. But my love became so obvious to the students at my desk—I raved about her constantly—that they were much amused. I begged them not to tell her anything, but betraying my confidence a football player told her laughingly that I was “crazy” about her. He said it in such a shockingly loud voice that at least thirty other students heard him.

Flustered, angry, I vehemently denied it. “Don’t you believe him,” I implored her. “It isn’t true; I’m not in love with you; honestly, I am not.” I was in despair. I thought she would never speak and smile to me again. With her I was like a shepherd with a princess. She was the most glamorous creature in the world. To me she was the Missouri, the American earth; green ferns, russet oak leaves, fox furs in vast primeval forests through which flowed the great rivers of America. She was a Viking’s daughter, and the noble niece of an Indian chief bearing some such tremendous name as Thundercloud or Sitting Bull.

She blushed, hung her head over her chemistry manual as I denied my love for her. Then, raising her eyes from the

book, she said with her sweetest smile, “I know you aren’t . . . in love. But you needn’t apologize. I wouldn’t mind if you were.”

But my secret was out. I felt so embarrassed, so utterly exposed, that I stayed away from her, never went to her desk again. She left college before the year was over and went back to Oklahoma.

Eva and Louise roomed together and studied public school music. I sang the *Messiah* and the *Elijah* with them in the college choir, and we took our meals in the same boarding house, before they joined a sorority. (Sorority girls were different from the others, definitely more attractive. The sorority system was undemocratic and cruel, but the girls were truer to their feminine calling, I thought.)

Eva was brunette, Louise blonde. To me, at least, they were very pretty and, like Veta, “maids of the Missouri.” I admired both, and though I was quite impartial in my attentions, Eva knew she was the one I was particularly interested in—and so did Louise. Sometimes I sang for them on the porch of the boarding house—Russian, Italian, Armenian songs. And once or twice I walked to the campus with them. I got to know them much better than I knew Veta, as I met them every day.

“I sure would like to see this picture,” Eva said one day, as we were sitting out on the porch and she was glancing through the college paper. “It opens on Saturday.”

I blurted out, “Let’s go see it together”—then gasped inwardly. What would I do if she refused? After all, I was a foreigner, an immigrant. I considered myself a guest in college.

“Let’s,” she said. “I wouldn’t want to miss it. Can you make it Saturday night?”

“Sure.”

So I had made a “date!” I controlled

my elation and tried to appear calm. Louise came out on the porch.

"We're going to a show on Saturday night," Eva said.

"Like brother and sister," I hastily added.

Louise laughed. "I thought Eva had vamped you but, boy, that's a good line! I've never heard *that* one before. Must be the continental technique."

"Of course, like brother and sister," I insisted. And to prove that I had no evil intentions I asked her to come along and act as chaperone.

"I don't need a chaperone!" Eva protested, giggling. "Don't be funny."

"Like heck you don't!" Louise said. "I wouldn't trust you with any guy." Turning to me: "I think she can take care of herself, though. You two go alone. Don't let me spoil your fun."

But I was determined that she go with us. The two girls exchanged a look in their own secret language, and Louise said, "Okay, brother. You win."

So I had made a date with two girls!

Later, I realized I had bit off more than I could chew, as Americans said. I had never had a date. I did not know what, precisely, I was supposed to do. The *modus operandi* of a date was an American mystery to me. I suspected there were certain conventions I had to observe.

In my predicament I went to the college library, my spiritual refuge, and, anxiously browsing around, fell upon Emily Post's *Blue Book of Etiquette*. I borrowed it and read it breathlessly, studying its sacred rules for introductions, social engagements, dancing, dining in a restaurant, escorting a lady to the theatre, the opera. I practiced introductions before the mirror in my room: "Miss Arbuthnot, Mr. Smith." "Miss Hendrickson, may I present Mr. Smith?" "How do you do?" A gentleman, I learned, lifts his hat

on greeting a lady, but not another gentleman. I had tipped my hat indiscriminately to both men and women—but that was wrong in America. Imagining myself with an American lady I practiced crossing a street—taking her arm protectively, and then, on reaching the curb, walking on the outside. I had no idea American social etiquette was so rigidly codified. I groaned over the mistakes I had made for a year and a half.

In fact, after reading the *Blue Book*, the responsibilities of my date weighed so heavily on my mind I felt I couldn't possibly go through it alone. I confided my fears to Ralph Correll, a Senior who took his meals at the same boarding house and knew Eva and Louise. I begged him to go with us, to see to it I didn't make a faux pas. He didn't need much persuasion. He slapped me on the back and said I was doing all right. He had tried to date the girls himself, but they were too "snooty."

Ralph was handsome, though not dashing—a strong, healthy boy. He worked in the genetics barracks of the state agricultural experiment station, read Ibsen and Bernard Shaw. Among the American students, he was my best friend. Though he wasn't a Sigma Chi or Sigma Nu, he had a couple of Greek letter pins on his vest—scholastic and church fraternities. He went with the daughter of a professor.

So on that memorable Saturday evening, scrubbed and polished, our hair slicked down and our faces newly tanned by a strong dose of ultra-violet rays in the genetics barracks, Ralph and I set out on our romantic adventure. As we marched to the white house with Venetian blinds and rose bushes on the lawn where Eva and Louise lived, we thrashed out some problems of eugenics, heredity, Germany, and Soviet Russia.

But at the door of that dream house I

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said in a weak voice, holding my side: "Ralph, my heart is going boom boom boom!"

He laughed. "Don't worry. We'll take care of 'em. Eva for you, Louise for me." Courageously he pressed the buzzer.

The landlady, a matronly woman, opened the door and invited us in with a nice smile. "The girls are upstairs dress-

The smile died on their faces when they saw Ralph. They stopped in their tracks. "Who told you to come?"

"We have a date with him, not with you," Eva said.

“What’s the big idea?” said Louise.

That they might prefer me to an American, and a Senior at that, when I was only a Sophomore, was something I had



ing. They will be down in a few minutes," she said. We waited in the living room. She asked me how I liked America. Answering for me, Ralph said, "He likes America very much—especially the girls."

"The two best things in America are the girls and the public libraries," I said, grinning.

"Well, I do think our public libraries are wonderful," she said, "and we certainly have some very nice girls. I really think our young people are wonderful, both girls and boys. I like to be with them. I like them much better than people my own age."

I was dying of anxiety and impatience. Putting my hand on my heart, I gazed meaningfully at Ralph. He signalled me to relax. But how could I? I was taking deep, deep breaths. Presently Eva and Louise came tripping downstairs with a thrilling click-clack of high heels. They wore new spring dresses and looked like two gorgeous butterflies. I jumped nervously to my feet.

not thought possible. Turning purple, Ralph stuttered a few disconnected words and started for the door.

"I asked him to come with me," I explained. I could not tell them why.

They relented. "Well, in that case it's different," said Eva. The crisis was over. I dragged Ralph back from the door. I was so happy I could have kissed all three.

A debonaire, slightly cock-eyed moon walked to the theatre with us. Now and then it winked knowingly at me. We were old friends; the moon knew everything about me. The spring night was pure enchantment. I felt like hugging the telephone poles.

I bought the tickets and, when we were seated, helped Eva take off her coat, leaving Louise to Ralph. A famous jazz band was playing in a blaze of tinselled colors and lights. The theatre was packed. From time to time different members of the band stood up and played their saxophones and other strange instruments, poking them up in the air, bending over,

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swaying. I didn't care for this blaring jungle music, but as long as Eva and Louise enjoyed it, and were with me, it was altogether appropriate for the occasion.

I couldn't get the jokes of a comedian, but Eva and Louise were screaming with delight, so I laughed, too. I applauded heartily three Negro tap dancers in top hats and tails, though I had no taste for tap dancing. Then came the newsreel, always interesting to me with its bathing beauties in Florida, inventions, personalities, fashions; and at last, the great new picture from Hollywood.

But I hardly saw it. Its scenes blurred. For Eva let me hold her hand. "Love birds," Louise said, leaning over.

After the show we had ice cream sodas, cake and coffee in a drugstore—very different from the pharmacies in the old country. I did the ordering, remembering the *Blue Book of Etiquette*. Then, on our way back, I told their fortunes, told them of my hopes, ambitions, monopolized the conversation.

I staggered back to my room like a drunken man. It was impossible for me to sleep. After tossing in bed half an hour, I got up, pulled on my trousers and shirt, and going out raced along the streets, laughing, talking to myself. It was well past midnight, and only the moon and I were out. I felt strong enough to smash walls and columns and carry buildings on my back, like Samson. I could have flown to the moon.

Veta, Eva, and Louise did not know they had accomplished what volumes of American history and civics could not do.

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*Leon Surmelian is a free-lance magazine writer and studio press correspondent in Hollywood, who also puts in a 4-hour shift at night helping build Flying Fortresses. This story is the sequel to his "America in My Blood," the account of his first summer in this country, which appeared in the Summer 1941 issue of CG and continues to be a popular anthology piece.*

## REPORT FROM THE MOUNTAIN STATES

BARRON B. BESHOAR

AFTER serving for sixteen months as a minority representative for the War Manpower Commission in the Rocky Mountain states, I reached the inevitable conclusion that no issue, whether chronic or born of war, transcends in importance that of racial, religious, and color discrimination. If we Americans are unwilling to put aside and forget unfounded prejudices and dislikes while facing a common foe, if we insist upon remaining hypersensitive to color and cultural differences,

if we continue to look with suspicion and sometimes with unreasoning hatred upon good neighbors and fellow citizens who are willing to fight with us, on either the battle line or the home front, our military successes and the ultimate victory will mean little in the final analysis.

Although the mountain states have not suffered from riots or bloodshed, discrimination is widespread. In some instances it is bold and audacious; in others it is subtle and hidden, but the effects are

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always the same. It deprives the nation of sorely needed manpower, denies jobs to workers who have contributions to make to the war effort, prevents upgrading of workers with skills and potential abilities, and destroys the morale of important segments of our population. Worse still, it fixes in the minds of many a belief that American democracy is an Anglo democracy, that it is not worthwhile to fight a war for democratic ideals in some distant and little known land if democracy is not to be given more than lip service in our own communities.

### II

Since well before the turn of the century, the Spanish-speaking people of the mountain area have been subjected to every known type of discrimination. Their plight has been relieved somewhat by the in-migration of Japanese Americans from the West Coast and from relocation centers, for the Nisei are now the chief targets of discrimination, but the pattern has not changed and there is every prospect that the citizen of Spanish descent will be in no better position after the war than he was before.

The difficulties of the so-called Spanish Americans or colonials began, of course, with the advent of the Americano, but instead of lessening with the passing of years, as might have been expected, they have become more acute. In Colorado, for example, Spanish names, once prominent in political, professional, and business circles, have all but disappeared. It isn't simply a matter of Anglo inundation. The Spanish-name citizen is still there, but his star is low on the horizon. If his name is Gallegos, he simply doesn't have the same opportunity as if his name were Smith.

Prior to the war, there was considerable friction in many parts of the mountain

area between Spanish Americans and Mexican Americans. The former contended, and correctly so, that they were of colonial stock and that they had no connection, political or national, with Mexico. Some of them erred, however, in aping their Anglo friends' contemptuous attitude toward Mexicans. The Mexican on his side, either alien or naturalized, was suspicious of the Spanish American, considering him a snobbish, racial mugwump.

Today, in the face of a bitter social and economic discrimination, the two groups have drawn together.

Taken as a whole, the Spanish-speaking residents of the Southwest have always found it difficult to compete with their Anglo countrymen in the matter of jobs. In the first place, the American of Spanish descent is not greedy for money. He appreciates his family, his church, and his social life; he usually does not value money for itself. The language disparity has always been a handicap. Then, too, the Spanish-name citizens, unlike Negroes, do not have strong, effective organizations such as the NAACP or the Urban League to fight discrimination. They are sensitive and not as prone to insist upon their rights as other minority groups.

In peace times the Spanish-name citizen is a loyal Democrat or a loyal Republican; during war periods he is a patriot, first and last. Before Selective Service was inaugurated, enlistments from the Spanish-speaking group were extremely heavy, and the group has also provided more than its share of inductees. It was perfectly natural for those who remained at home to think their services would be valued by war contractors and essential industries. Employers were crying for help and Spanish-name workers were available. It was a shock to them to discover that a Spanish name was a barrier to employment advertised as both patriotic

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and essential to the war effort. Yet over and over again they found that personnel representatives of war industries, who visited their sections on positive recruitment tours, passed them up for less qualified Anglos. Even if the Spanish American had an education, a needed skill, and a good knowledge of English, the desirable jobs went to the Anglos of the community.

In one case I remember, the father of the family was a disabled veteran of World War I and the son of a Union Army veteran. His two sons were repeatedly denied jobs because they were "Mexicans." After trying desperately for many weeks to obtain suitable jobs, they were inducted and are today serving in the armed forces. In another case, an aged father and mother were descendants of the first settlers in what is now New Mexico. Their ancestors were pioneering in the West when the Anglos were still struggling to maintain a toehold on the East Coast. Their oldest boy died in Bataan. The week the family was notified that the second son, a pilot, was shot down and lost in the Pacific, the third and last son, a college graduate and the sole support of the family, was denied work by three different Denver employers who told him they couldn't take him "because we don't hire Mexicans."

But as manpower shortages became more acute, Spanish Americans who migrated to war centers were more readily hired. They still encountered other types of discrimination, however. On one Colorado project, for instance, employing approximately 9,000 workers, 300 Spanish-name citizens obtained jobs as laborers. The Anglos had heated barracks and mess-halls on the project site, but the 300 Spanish Americans had to drive 19 miles over high mountains each morning and night. Finally, all 300 were summarily discharged. The project engineer said he

had ordered the discharge of all loafers and that it "just happened" that all the lazy workers were of Spanish origin. It "just happened" that not one of the 300 Spanish Americans was a diligent worker. His explanation for his failure to provide the men with barrack space and mess facilities was not even artful. He simply said he did not provide barrack space because there was none available for persons of Spanish extraction; that meals were not provided "because Mexicans eat such different foods." He seemed to think these men lunched on *piñon* nuts and supped on *tacos* and *frijoles refritos*. He professed surprise when told they were accustomed to steak and potatoes, ham and eggs, pie and cake. He was directed by the War Manpower Commission to reinstate the men and provide them with facilities equal to those enjoyed by the Anglos.

A month later, when the Spanish-name workers began to drift out of the mountains with complaints of ill treatment, it was discovered that the project engineer had made only a gesture toward compliance with federal policy. He had given the Spanish Americans a number of tents and placed them out of sight of the main camp. The tents were not equipped with floors or stoves though the nights were bitterly cold. There were no bathing facilities for the group. Heat, floors, showers, and other facilities, which made it possible for men to stay on this difficult, high-altitude job, were still reserved for the Anglos.

Justice was finally obtained for the Spanish group through the efforts of the War Manpower Commission and the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice.

Another discriminatory practice is to keep Spanish Americans in jobs that do not measure up to their skill. During the war construction period, it was not un-

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common for citizens of Spanish descent, well qualified through training and experience as truck drivers and operators of construction machinery, to be kept on pick-and-shovel jobs and hence in the lowest wage brackets, while recruiters combed the midwestern states seeking so-called white workers for the better-paid jobs.

Closely allied with this practice is that of paying a double wage scale, the Spanish-name citizen receiving a "Mexican" scale while his Anglo brother, doing exactly the same work, receives a higher or "white" scale. There have been instances where the Latin American, at the direction of his employer, acted as an instructor to Anglos recruited from Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas to fill jobs that should have gone to Mr. Gallegos and Mr. Martinez. The instructor received the "Mexican" scale while the pupil received the "white" rate. And then, when the Anglo had learned the job, he was usually promoted to an even higher paid job while the faithful Latin American worked on at the "Mexican" scale without hope of advancement.

I asked a representative of a large southwestern industry how he and his colleagues justified this practice. "You don't know these people as well as we do," he replied. "They wouldn't know what to do with more money if they had it. In fact, we think we are exerting an important moral influence, as they would do foolish things if they had more money." This "moral influence" could be accurately measured: the number of Spanish-name workers times the differential in scales showed this industry was exerting "moral influence" to the tune of about \$7,400 weekly or \$384,800 annually.

The reasons behind discrimination against Spanish Americans, as well as against other minorities, are many and

varied. On the one hand, we find the employer who has seen Mexican villains on the screen and who owns a pair of bookends that feature a sombreroed figure asleep against a giant cactus. Therefore Mr. Gallegos and Mr. Martinez are dishonest and lazy. This fellow can be put on the right track with comparative ease. On the other hand, we find employers who believe they have real reasons for their discriminatory policies. They contend that the tradition of their business requires a particular type of worker; that introduction of minorities into their operation would disrupt morale and cause their white workers to walk out; that minority group members lack the background and temperament necessary for the type of work; that the business would lose customers if minorities were employed.

I once asked a railroad man (though I knew the answer) why I had never met an engineer of Spanish or Italian extraction. "That's easy," he said. "They aren't discriminated against because of their race. They're Latins, see? They're excitable and would let the boilers blow up. We got to protect the public on the railroads." Fortunately, the Latin temperament does not prevent Spanish Americans from laying rails or doing other heavier and less remunerative jobs on railroads.

Occasionally you will find an employer who bluntly refuses to employ minorities and states his reasons frankly. He just doesn't like Spanish Americans or Negroes or people with Japanese faces, and he doesn't want them around. Most of the employers who discriminate, however, mouth democracy even while excluding minorities through such devices as restrictive job specifications and physical examinations.

Discrimination on the part of unions is most common in the highly skilled crafts, many of which have provisions

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in their constitutions which bar Latin Americans and Negroes from membership and hence from apprenticeships and jobs. These fellows are hard for us to handle. The business agent of the local lays his ears back, bares his teeth, and growls an emphatic "No." If the national and international officers can be brought around, and usually they are much more farsighted, gains can be made. Oddly enough, and this is true of both employers and employees who place obstacles in the way of minorities, a surprisingly large proportion of those who tell you that "Mexicans and niggers ought to be run out of this country" are themselves comparative newcomers, who came to the United States in search of liberty and equality of opportunity. Their attitude is largely a defense mechanism, an unfortunate and misguided effort to ally themselves with what they believe to be the majority opinion in the United States.

In all cases involving discriminatory hiring practices, the War Manpower Commission follows a set procedure. When the employer places the restrictive order, the United States Employment Service seeks relaxation to open the order to qualified workers without restriction as to race, creed, color, or national origin. If the employer refuses to amend his order, an attempt is made to fill it anyway. However, the Employment Service reports the discriminatory order to the War Manpower Commission. This report is referred to the minority representative who makes an investigation. If the inquiry shows that discrimination has been practiced, the minority representative seeks to induce the employer (or the labor union, as the case may be) to hire solely on the basis of qualifications. If he fails, the case is then turned over to the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice for action.

The batting average has been higher than might be supposed, but a great deal remains to be done. On the whole, the attitude of War Manpower Commission and Employment Service personnel toward minority problems has been both wholesome and helpful though, as in every large organization, there are individuals who are not tuned to the policy.

### III

After Japanese Americans settled in the mountain states and substantial numbers of Negroes migrated into the area in search of work, many establishments hastily employed Spanish Americans, using them as a screen to hide discrimination against the other groups. Through this stratagem, employers hoped to be able to prove they were complying in spirit and in fact with the President's Executive Order 9346 of May 27, 1943 (or its predecessor, Order 8802), which provides that there shall be no discrimination in government or defense industries because of race, creed, color, or national origin. "Oh no, we don't discriminate because of race," the employer would cry. "Look! We have 142 Mexicans on our payroll."

Usually the only Negro employee was the janitor who took care of the manager's office, and there were no employees of Japanese extraction. The latter have been extremely difficult to place in any industry connected with the war effort. Employers contend that, if the military could not trust American citizens of Japanese extraction on the West Coast, then they cannot trust them in their plants. The tragic evacuation is cited almost daily in the mountain area as proof that Japanese Americans must not be employed in essential work.

In the last months of 1943, however, personnel and employment officers, both

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within and without the government, came to look upon Japanese Americans with a little more consideration. Nisei girls with clerical training were readily placed, particularly in government agencies. The achievements of the Japanese American combat team in Italy and the publication in newspapers of stories about heroes with Japanese names had a telling effect. But, since the turn of the year, a new cloud has risen on the Japanese American horizon in the West.

In Idaho, the State Grange has adopted a resolution proposing that no "part or parcel of land in the United States be sold or leased to any Japanese by the owner or agent thereof or by the United States government." The Daily Statesman of Boise promptly clubbed the State Grange with a forthright editorial which branded the resolution as "one that must be abhorrent to any American not completely robbed of his senses and his decency by hatreds." Yet the Idaho Grange action caused repercussions in other mountain states. In Colorado, delegations from two widely separated counties called on Governor Vivian to stop Japanese American purchases of farm lands within their counties. The committees contended the Japanese Americans were paying high prices for the land and that "it looks as though they were fostered by some sort of organization with all the money they need." The Governor has called the attention of the two counties to constitutional guarantees, but subsequently succumbed to vociferous demands from pressure groups and called a special session of the legislature to consider a proposal that Japanese aliens be barred from owning land in Colorado. The lower House voted the measure 48 to 15, after heated sessions and public hearings which saw scores of groups lined up against the proposal. Fortunately, the Senate, by a vote of 15 to 12, killed the obnoxious bill. The

Senate vote does not appear to have ended the matter, however, as proponents of anti-Japanese legislation now contend they will place their proposals on the ballot by petition. This dangerous movement is being watched closely by all persons in the West who are interested in preserving democracy.

The federal attitude toward Japanese Americans is one of bewildering inconsistency. Although the wording of Executive Order 9346 (or 8802) does not exclude persons of Japanese extraction, it is of little effect where they are concerned. Orders issued by Army authorities and other federal officials have been sufficient to keep Japanese Americans of known loyalty out of essential war work. When an employer has orders from the Army not to hire Japanese Americans, he isn't going to worry too much about Order 9346 or the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice.

This flaunting of Order 9346 in regard to Japanese Americans has, of course, weakened it all along the line and made its enforcement as regards Spanish Americans, Negroes, and other minority groups extremely difficult. Order 9346 either means what it says or it doesn't mean anything at all. Too many employers believe it doesn't mean anything at all.

Seven Japanese Americans were employed on one isolated war project in the mountain area for several days. When it was discovered they were of Japanese extraction, they were immediately rounded up by armed guards, placed in a bus, and sent to a city 100 miles distant where they were dumped out on the streets. It was explained that the project was secret and confidential. The men had been grubbing willows from the floor of a wild, mountain valley preparatory to construction. When the project was completed and the installation actually in use, Japanese Americans were employed in the

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operation. This is a fair example of our consistency.

I once succeeded in getting a young Japanese American, a graduate of the University of Washington, into a war plant. I almost had to use a crowbar. I am proud to say that the United States Employment Service helped in every possible way. Once in, the young man took a lot of abuse for a time. Today he is one of the most highly prized employees in the establishment. That story can be repeated a few times, but the percentage of such placements is small.

I remember another young Japanese American boy, a native of Colorado, who obtained a job on a defense project through referral by the uses. He was assigned to break ground with a shovel on a lonely prairie. There was nothing around him except prairie dogs and lizards, cactus and Spanish needles. While he was busy with his shovel, guards placed him under arrest, marched him to the edge of the project reservation, and told him to get on down the road. He wasn't even allowed to get his automobile from its parking place near the contractor's tarpaper shack-office.

This project has been completed and today there are soldiers stationed there. Some of them are of Japanese extraction.

One of the few breaks the Japanese Americans have had is that they are not subjected to the subtle, mountain form of Jim Crowism which excludes Negroes from restaurants, theatres, and the like. The Nisei are generally accepted anywhere Caucasians are accepted. The only exception I know of is a well-known Colorado dance palace which will not admit a Nisei couple, but will welcome a Nisei girl escorted by a Caucasian. Actually, the Japanese Americans are finding readier social acceptance than the Spanish Americans. A person with a Spanish name who is light of hair and skin has little diffi-

culty, but those who are dark have almost as many barriers in their way as Negroes.

Leaders of the Japanese American and Spanish-speaking groups have worked well together on interracial bodies, but there the co-ordination ends. There is a feeling among many of the Nisei that they are superior to Spanish Americans and Negroes, while these two groups are inclined to see the person with a Japanese face as just another economic competitor. The Spanish American has been quick to recognize, too, that the educational level among young Japanese Americans is higher than among his own young people.

One of the bright spots in the mountain states has been the almost complete absence of discrimination against Jewish and alien groups. There is some anti-Semitism, but there is no pattern of job discrimination and complaints have been few in number. The Italians, Slavs, and other groups have little or no difficulty.

The Negro in the mountain states is no better off, but most certainly no worse off, than in any northern state. The war has brought him new problems in the form of an influx of Southerners to war establishments and industries in the mountain region. The white Southerners bring their ingrained conception of white-colored relationships with them, but fortunately they have made little impression on the established white residents. There has been no outcropping of "white only" signs, and there have been no new restrictions placed on the colored group. Many war plants have made it a point to employ the same percentage of colored workers as the percentage of colored residents in the community. This in itself is discriminatory, but superior to exclusion. The colored workers who have been placed have proven generally satisfactory.

Paradoxical situations sometimes arise. The metal mining industry, which has grown by leaps and bounds under the im-

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petus of war demands for copper, molybdenum, zinc, and other fighting metals, is still closed to Negroes and Japanese Americans and partially closed to Spanish Americans. Yet, when soldiers were released from the Army for metal mines several months ago, 39 Negroes were among the complement sent to Butte, Montana. Despite efforts of national officers of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (IUMMSW), and officials of the War Manpower Commission and Anaconda Copper Company, the miners of the powerful Butte local union would not permit the Negroes to enter Butte mines.

These Negro soldiers were finally sent to Victoria Lease, Nevada, an operation of the International Smelting and Refining Company, a subsidiary of Anaconda. The only whites on the job were the superintendent, Al Wondershek, and two foremen. The colored soldiers were novices; they had to be taught metal mining from the beginning. At the outset they made a poor showing. Their morale was bad as a result of the Butte experience. Officials of the mining company became alarmed and finally called on the War Manpower Commission. I went to the Nevada operation and spent two days with the men. I told them they were the only Negro metal miners in the West, that the eyes of the entire industry were on them, that if they failed the industry would undoubtedly remain closed to colored miners for many years to come. A month later, James Elton, general manager of the company, reported that the colored crew had the best production record of any crew of miners employed by his company. I don't think Superintendent Wondershek, a first-class hard-rock man, will mind my telling this:

When the Negro soldiers were en route to Victoria Lease, Wondershek telephoned General Manager Elton in Salt

Lake City and said, "If you send Negroes out here, I'll quit."

He was prevailed upon to stay, and weeks later, after he had worked his new men into a first-class crew, he learned the men might be moved to another mine. Again he called Elton on the telephone. "If you take my Negroes away from me, I'll quit!"

I sometimes think the answer to the problem posed by racial discrimination is in this one incident. If you are an average white American, you have probably had very little contact with Americans of the colored groups. You have seen them on the streets and you know one or two to nod to casually. But you don't even know the one or two individuals well. All you know about them is what you've been told by persons who had nothing to offer except age-old, unfounded prejudices which were passed down to them. And then you get to know a few members of a minority group, any minority group, and you discover they are just people.

That is the task ahead today: to break down artificial barriers, to insure justice through such agencies as the FEPC and the minority service of the War Manpower Commission, to brush away outmoded ideas of racial differences, to bring each American to the realization that his fellow American, regardless of his racial extraction, is "just people."

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# FREEDOM'S BLOOD

JO SINCLAIR

THEY called it the "Americans All" program. All the familiar old "nationalities" names of Cleveland were involved, the people who ate paprikash and blintzes and egg roll, the people who read the *Ameriska Domovina*, the *Jewish Daily World*, the *Wiadomosci Codzienne*.

The Consulate of the Netherlands sent out mimeographed appeals: "This Is a Plea for Your Blood. No more, no less. During the past three years, Holland has asked from thousands of us the last drop of blood. Now she asks you for . . . one pint." And on May 14th, the third anniversary of the bombing of Rotterdam, hundreds of pledges were turned over to the Greater Cleveland Blood Donor Service of the American Red Cross in a public ceremony: "In commemoration of the invasion of the Netherlands, I hereby pledge to donate my blood to the American Red Cross at the earliest possible date."

"Americans All" they called the program; yet plans had to include the motherland as well as the United States, the old as well as the new desire for freedom.

The Hungarians started their blood donor registrations at a large picnic on Magyar Day (St. Stephen). Prominent in the activities were the spiritual head of the First Hungarian Lutheran Church and the chairman of the Hungarian American War Aid Council, and other well-known Hungarian Americans. The French began registration on Bastille Day, and on Empire Day the British vice-consulate launched registrations for the British-born. A successful drive on Czechoslovak Day was soon announced by the Konsulat

Ceskoslovenske Republiky. A "Committee for Blood Donors of Czech and Slovak Origin," set up within a week, included representatives of the Czech American National Alliance, the Catholic Czech District Council, the Slovak National Alliance, the Sewing Clubs of the American Red Cross, and the Slovak Evangelicals. On October 25th, registration for Cleveland Slovenes took place simultaneously at five Slovenian halls.

When recruitment was started among Cleveland Jews, it was backed by the efforts of the B'nai B'rith, the Council of Jewish Women, the Federation of Jewish Women's Clubs, the Jewish Young Adult Bureau, and the women's association of the Euclid Avenue Temple. The Association of Polish Women, the Union of Poles in America, the American Polish Women's Club, and the Polish Blue Star Mothers helped Polish American blood to flow. Then along came the Sons of Italy in America, the Italian Women's Club, the Croatian Knitting Club, the Finnish Women's Club, the German Turnvereins, the Ukrainian Labor Temple, the Lithuanian Women's Club. The Swedish Consulate and Norwegian Relief, Inc., worked hand in hand.

Many of the donors had lived through the First World War, had seen their neighbors and brothers die. Now, living through another more terrible war, they are saying good-bye to their own sons. Many have already received the feared telegram, again know the anguished import of war at first hand. Blood of their blood. It is a word they know well. But

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now it has achieved a new significance; now it is something to give toward life, not to shed in bitterness and hatred and death. These are the people whose heritage is a powerful mixture of liberty and enslavement, hope and migration, work and song. Their story is the story of the migrating, varied bloods of the world and how they came at last to flow into Cleveland's factories and offices, into her slums and "good" streets; into the blood of Ohio and of America.

No one knows how many thousands of pints have been donated by the nationality groups of Cleveland. There can be no accurate count as far as particular groups are concerned, for whereas 50 Hungarian Americans may come in a body on Monday to give their blood, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday Hungarian Americans may come singly, as individuals, registering not under a group but under only a name: Kovach, Varga, Kormendy.

Donations are continuous. Those who registered first as part of a group on Empire Day or on Bastille Day have come in as individual donors many times since then, have come three and four times, will come again once every two months until this war is won. All the melting pot names are here again: Weinstein, Perez, Carlson, Nagy, Klonowski. What makes an America? What makes the blood of an America? Each pint bottle at the Cleveland Blood Donor Service has a neatly labeled tag tied to it: Waverka, Vondra, Goldberg, Grdina, Anderson, Geraci. What goes into a pint of blood to make it the right kind? the kind that will make a wounded man sit up, stand up, start again to march?

Within two war years, the weekly quota of the Blood Donor Service of the Greater Cleveland Chapter of the American Red Cross has risen from 500 to 4,000 pints. In this coming year of war, 4,000 pints of blood must be contributed

from this area each week, that wounded American men may live—men whose parents came to Cleveland from those very countries where now they are fighting; men who themselves came here as children from villages now crumbled into nothingness by bombs.

The gifts to America from her foreign-born citizens have been numerous and grateful. They have been offerings—to a bountiful, peaceful country—of labor and laughter, of song and dance, of Old-World culture, man's yearning and hope for the promise of a New World. This gift of blood to America in her wartime throes is a graver offering. It is given humbly and eagerly, in a kind of dual contribution. It is an offering both to that land which was new and of dream to them in the younger time of the early gifts, and to the land which is now irrevocably their own, which has encompassed them and their children and for which their children today are engaged in a monumental war.

And if a woman tenderly presses the small patch of bandage on her arm and says to herself: "This pint I have given for freedom in Llublyana, too!" will America frown?

Or if a donor, looking at the pint of blood he has just given, says to himself: "This pint I give for the Jews, too, as well as for my country," will America be angry?

Or if a young man, having made his first blood donation, thinks: "That is also for Grandfather in Naples. Let him be free some day, too!" will not America understand?

For surely freedom is a pint of blood for all the world.

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*Jo Sinclair will be remembered for "Red Necktie," a story in the Spring 1941 issue, and "I, Too, Sing America," Autumn 1942, an account of Karamu House in Cleveland.*

# THE ARTIST AND THE WAR

YASUO KUNIYOSHI

I WAS once quoted by an art critic as saying that I would dig trenches to do my share in this war. What I really said was that I would like to contribute and do everything I could as an artist, but if I were needed to dig trenches I would—and I can, too. Being an artist doesn't prevent me from having the same feelings as other human beings. However, I feel that I can be of more use in the field I know best.

Just what is the artist's role in the war is a question that has been puzzling thousands of us all over the country. We have held countless meetings to try to decide just what we as a group and as individuals should do. And as far as I know we have come to no satisfactory agreement.

As a cultural group we have been alert to the world around us. We realized as far back as 1931 the menace in the invasion of Manchuria and promptly boycotted Japanese goods, picketed their consulate, and organized anti-fascist exhibitions to circulate over the country. We felt deeply about the Spanish Civil War. We realized the very real danger of fascism and tried to make this danger known through our work and through our activities.

To this total and absolute war, I think we have responded more as individuals, as persons, rather than as a group. Some who are too old for combat duty have thrown aside their brushes and taken jobs in war plants. Some have retired into the country to raise cattle. Others are making posters or expressing anti-fascist ideas in their painting. In Russia and England and

America artists have been sent to the very battle fronts to make pictorial records of the war. Unfortunately the plan of assigning 40 American artists by the War Department to active war fronts has collapsed, but since then Life Magazine has taken over. While this project is not official, it is gratifying to note that the artists' contribution is not ignored.

Attendance at museums and galleries has been steadily increasing since the war began. More people are buying paintings. More people feel the need of this kind of spiritual stimulus. We artists can fill that need.

But we are also part of the existing world, and we must fight for the things we believe, in whatever way we can. For the war against fascism is not only to be fought abroad by our armed forces. There is a big job to do here at home, too. I was lucky enough to have a chance to do propaganda radio scripts for the former Donovan Committee and, more lately, to make war posters and illustrations for the OWI. It has made me happy to have even this small part in the national effort.

Through these activities I received an interesting letter from a ten-year-old boy, a student at the Sheldon School, Grand Rapids, Michigan. In answering him, I tried to focus for myself my relation as an artist to this America we love. Here is his letter:

Dear Mr. Kuniyoshi:

We are studying about "Worthwhile People," what outstanding things they

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have done. So we are studying you because our art teacher told us something about you.

Your pictures are very beautiful, because our art teacher showed them to us. We are going to buy one of your pictures with the fifty cents we got for having the most mothers at our PTA meeting.

The children of our room would like to ask you some questions. What do you broadcast to Japan? What kind of family do you have? Why do you give money from your pictures to China? If you have children, do you want them to be artists? What do you like in America? How does America differ from Japan in houses, churches, parks, schools, food, stores, clothes, amusements, hospitals?

Sincerely,

JAMES REED

p.s. We are going to get some more money and put with the fifty cents.

Dear James:

I was very happy to get your letter and I will try to answer your questions, telling you all about my activities and my attitude concerning the war and myself.

I was born in the southern part of the main island of Japan in the town of Okayama a long time ago and I came to America in 1906 as a boy, all by myself.

When I was a boy, I was very romantic. I wanted to see the entire world and all its people, but I didn't have any idea that I wanted to become an artist. I just came here to the United States out of curiosity and planned to go home after a few years of studying English. Frankly, that was about all I had on my mind when I first came here.

I landed in Seattle and then I went to Los Angeles where I attended public school. One of my teachers urged me to study painting because she thought I was

talented in that direction. That was how I started my art career—quite by accident. Although I always liked to draw and enjoyed seeing pictures, I didn't dream of being an artist until that time.

Nor did I think then that I was going to remain in America so many years. I am glad and happy to say that I have stayed. I will stay all my life because this is my home. America has given me everything; it has taught me the democratic way of life which to me is the real essence of worthwhile living. If I had children, I would be very proud of their being American. I am very proud to consider myself an American artist, and I am proud that I am generally thought of in that way. Artists are valuable to a community because they have vision and they add to the cultural background which is the strength of a democratic nation.

Do you know that no matter how long I live here I cannot ever become an American citizen because I was born in Japan and Japanese are excluded from that privilege by law? In appearance I am Oriental, but my beliefs, my ideals, and my sentiments have been shaped by living in the free American atmosphere most of my life. At heart I am an American, and I see and feel everything in that way.

I trust you and your friends know everything about what we are fighting for—about the cruelty of the Japanese militarists and the savagery of the Nazis. It is a war of one set of ideals against another. The Axis nations are bent on the destruction of democratic civilization and wish to return to a world of barbarism. We are determined to prevent them from succeeding. We visualize a better world in which everybody can be free. That is the war as I see it.

It is not a racial war. Look at the Chinese. They are an Oriental people, yet they are fighting the Japanese along with the other United Nations. They feel the

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same and have the same ideals as Americans have. We must all fight to win to a decisive victory without compromise. We will win because we know that our way of life is the only way to live, and that determination will carry us to victory.

In the past, people have asked me from time to time what I really felt about Japan. They were often kindly and considerate and made efforts to console me because I was born there. I have always replied that children are born everywhere all over the world, and it was my fate to be born in Japan. But environment and circumstances will mold a man no matter where he originated. I am very grateful that I came here and became molded by American attitudes and democratic viewpoints.

I have been actively anti-Japanese since the first Japanese invasion of China in 1931 and, needless to say, my feeling toward the other Axis powers is equally one of loathing. When the Office of War Information accepted my offer in January 1942 to write scripts for the short-wave radio, I insisted on doing it under my own name because I believed this the only way to transmit my messages to the Japanese. Whatever prestige my name enjoys could best be utilized by the United States in that way. My messages were to the cultural groups—to the artists, writers, musicians, and professional people who should be capable of understanding what democracy is. I told them all about the kind of life here, what America is like, what we believe in, the advantages of life in a democracy. I tried to make clear why we are fighting. I told them about myself, how I was able to live as usual and con-

tinue painting, how I was able to continue teaching painting in two schools where, in spite of being an "enemy alien," I had more students than ever before.

I warned them that under a government such as that of Japan there can be no future for cultural pursuits such as art and literature. I told them it is never too late to awake and rise up in opposition to their cruel regime. Recently I have been doing posters for the OWI, and I like this sort of work very much. War posters are to me weapons with which to fight the enemy.

Such are my beliefs.

I hope that when you and your classmates have time you will write me again. I will always be glad to hear from you.

Good health and best wishes to all of you.

YASUO KUNIYOSHI

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*This was a speech by Yasuo Kuniyoshi at the American Common at the close of an art exhibit sponsored by Japanese American artists, writers, and musicians for the benefit of the National War Fund. Mr. Kuniyoshi is represented in all the major museums and art collections in America. Winner of many awards and Guggenheim Fellow in 1935, he is active in the work of many art groups in the country—the American Society of Painters, Sculptors and Gravers, the Woodstock Artists Association, the American Artists' Congress, Salons of America, and the H. E. Field Art Foundation. He is instructor at the Art Students League and the New School for Social Research in New York City.*

## SOUTHERN DEFENSIVE - I

J. SAUNDERS REDDING

THERE has been much highly publicized activity on the interracial front in recent months. The impression is abroad that a major offensive is being waged against the forces of racism. Blown up by both the well-meaning and the merely ambitious to look like offensive actions of the first consequence, there have been organized skirmishes, patrols, and feeling-out thrusts. Some of these have had a modicum of importance and all have been of sufficient effectiveness to justify them in the minds of the participants. Other engagements are planned. A troop of interracial crusaders has been on the alert in the Harlem sector of New York City for several months. In the late summer, part of this troop, armed with loud speakers mounted on scout cars, risked limb and life to defend public and private property against a swarm of disorganized rebels. Under the command of its battle-weary mayor, Detroit has such a troop. Winston-Salem, North Carolina and Birmingham, Alabama are at the ready. A squad in Chicago, faced with the bitter knowledge that the valiant battles of 1919 ended in no victory, are preparing for new battles under a new commander. Everywhere signals are up, flags unfurled, lines restive.

But this is no matter for ridicule, for what we have here is not folly. Or if it is, it is well-intentioned, stemming from the anxiety of minds too troubled to grasp the meaning of all this activity in such widely separated areas of the war against racism. The meaning is two-fold. First,

it means that no offensive is being waged and that the frantic activity is purely a defensive holding action. And second, it means that the war against racism is a national war and that it must be so fought and so considered. The habit of thought that would tear the Negro problem out of its national context is a southern habit of thought and (though not necessarily for the reason that it is southern) it is potentially more harmful than beneficial. When the newest expression of this thinking, the Southern Regional Council, was set up recently, the dangerous potentials became immediately evident. Became evident also the workings of the peculiarly regional mind that has traditionally believed in miracles.

## II

The Southern Regional Council had an interesting beginning. In October 1942, a group of Negroes assembled in Durham, North Carolina. They met as Southerners and as Negroes, and their purpose was to discuss their unfortunate situation. Neither in position nor in opinion were the men who met there representative of the southern Negro. Indeed, they did not claim to be. They "met as individuals." It was a homogeneous grouping. There were fifty-six of them (excluding the wives), of whom thirty were educational workers—college presidents, college deans, school principals, and teachers. There were also some ministers, a publisher, one or two business

men, and a few doctors, labor officials, and social workers. They were a solid segment of southern Negro middle-class thought. Excepting a scant handful, all were directly dependent to a greater or less degree upon the will and the purse of the white South. What this dependence means is grossly illustrated in the story of the Negro preacher in a mortgaged church who could not preach a funeral because the dead man "elevated hisself up wid white folks."

After several hours of conferences, the group that had met as individuals constituted themselves a body, obliquely declared that body's representativeness, solidified its opinion, and chose a committee to make that opinion known. Then they scattered, principally to North Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia, the three states from which thirty-four of them had come. Two months later a committee of the body issued a document now known as the Durham Statement. The Durham Statement begins with a brilliant recital. All of the introductory is worth quoting, but space will not permit. (Except where otherwise indicated, all italics are mine.)

"We, a group of southern Negroes . . . take this means of recording our considered views of the issues before us.

"1. Our nation is engaged in a worldwide struggle, the success of which, both in arms and ideals, is paramount and demands our first loyalty.

"2. Our loyalty does not, in our view, preclude consideration now of problems and situations that handicap the working out of internal improvements in race relations essential to our full contribution to the war effort. . . .

"3. We are fundamentally opposed to the principle and practice of compulsory segregation in our American society . . . however we regard it as both sensible and timely to address ourselves now to the current problems of racial discrimination

and neglect, and to ways in which we may co-operate in the advancement of programs aimed at the sound improvement of race relations. . . ."

Then there follows under seven headings a cumulative lessening of conviction until the earlier implications of the statement seem to dribble away. Indeed, some have professed to see in it toward the end a darkly implied approval of segregation. But, even so, there is still much of courage in the statement, and its force was not totally lost until the modifiers were added, until, by the very fact of later southern white endorsement, it was qualified. The Durham Statement was signed by a committee of ten. Seven of the committee were educators.

In the view of a vocal segment of the white South, the Durham Statement was so "frank and courageous, so free from any suggestion of threat and ultimatum, and at the same time showed such goodwill" that this segment felt the statement could not be ignored. The "individuals" who made up this segment felt they must co-operate. "We gladly agree to co-operate."

And so, in April, 1943, one hundred and fifteen southern whites held a conference in Atlanta, Georgia. They met as Southerners and as white people, and they spoke as "individuals." Publicized as the Atlanta Statement, the declaration issued by the Atlanta conferees was in general vague and equivocal, flabby with soft ambiguities, and creamy with abstractions. "We hope," it says, "to point the pathway for future co-operative efforts and to give assurance of our sincere goodwill and desire to co-operate in any sound program aimed at the improvement of race relations."

And in a longer passage, we find:

". . . The only justification offered for those laws which have for their purpose the separation of the races is that they

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are intended to minister to the welfare and integrity of both races. . . . The white Southerner has an obligation to interest himself in the *legitimate* aspirations of the Negro. . . . The distribution of public utilities and public benefits, such as sewers, water, housing, street and sidewalk paving, playgrounds, public health, and hospital facilities should come to the Negro *upon the basis of population and need.*"

Though only one hundred and fifteen whites attended the Atlanta Conference, the statement was signed by more than three hundred, most prominent among whom were a state Governor, a Methodist bishop, and three newspaper men. Others included liberal preachers, college presidents, business executives, and social service workers.

In June, two months following the issuance of the Atlanta Statement, a collaboration committee, made up of "representatives" of the white Atlanta Conference and the Negro Durham Conference, met in Richmond, Virginia. It was this committee's business not only to symbolize biracial co-operation but to appoint a "continuing committee." It took time out, however, to issue a statement also. A part of that statement reads (*italics not mine*): "For here is the white South, a great people often doing little things and a good people often doing *bad* things. And here is the Negro South, caught as always between the upper and nether millstones of conflicting forces and also paying the price of extraordinary transition from level to level of cultural achievement, and needing plenty of understanding and co-operation. And here is the white South inexorably conditioned by cultural complexes. . . ."

This statement bears the signatures of eight persons, at least three of whom seem to have had no previous connection with either the Durham or the Atlanta Con-

ference. Their names appear neither among those in attendance at the Durham Conference nor among those signed to the Atlanta Statement.

The continuing committee was "charged with the responsibility for working out methods and practical means of approach." The committee has shown due regard for its responsibility by creating the Southern Regional Council, which has already begun to function as a professional body of interracial people of wholly southern sympathies with the chief purpose of solving the race problem.

### III

Whether because of the very nature of the issue, or through inadvertence (which a statement of the case seems to rule out), or a desperate disregard for logic, the proposed program of the Southern Regional Council is shot through with three basic contradictions. Perhaps they grow out of the complex emotional-intellectual nature of the race problem, but they seem so compelling in their pertinency that they cannot be ignored.

In the first place, the formation of the Southern Regional Council was a duplicating action. There was already in the field the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, Inc. It had been in the field for a generation, and it had branches all over the South. It had its own channels of publicity. It had been very active. Among its most active co-operators were men and women, some of them, indeed, its officers, who are now in the position of repudiating it to form a new but essentially similar organization to do the same work. Some of these men and women, to name only a few, are Mrs. Jessie Daniel Ames, top administrator of the C.I.C., Charles S. Johnson, one of C.I.C.'s directors and now a moving spirit in the new organization, Howard Odum,

also one of C.I.C.'s directors, Virginius Dabney, Kendall Weisiger, Mrs. Charlotte H. Brown, C. C. Spaulding, and Ralph McGill.

This is a disturbing fact, and it brings us face to face with the first basic contradiction. Has the Interracial Commission failed? And if it has failed, how has it failed? Has it been the failure of the men and women who directed it? Has it been the failure of the machinery through which they worked? Has it been the failure of the propaganda idea and of the idea of solving the race problem by the conference method?

Obviously the whole answer to these questions is locked in the secrecy which has ever marked the ins and outs of organized interracial co-operation in the South. But a lack of answers does not obviate the necessity for them. Developments of the past year seem to indicate that the Interracial Commission has failed, or that it has been so limited in its effectiveness that it amounts to failure. If this were not so, then, to say the least, the spectacle of its repudiation by the very people who have been its brain and bone is highly erratic.

If the men and women who directed the Interracial Commission have been the failures, then it is an ingenuous logic which provides that these same men and women should also be directing forces in the new Southern Regional Council. They are worn gears in what is at best a reconditioned machine. And if it is the machinery that has failed, then it seems quixotic to rebuild that same machinery for the purpose of doing more of the same work that the Interracial Commission was set up to do.

If the failure of the Interracial Commission represents a failure of the propaganda idea and of the idea of solving the race problem by the conference method, one asks what different thing, what dif-

ferent techniques does the Southern Regional Council propose to employ? Obviously, it is in no sense an official body (one of its supporters has even disclaimed its professionalism!), and it will have no powers of enforcement. It will have no legal authority. It must propagandize, it must devote itself to unofficial education, and it must hold conferences all over the place. In short, it must use those very ideas, methods, and techniques which the Interracial Commission has used—apparently without success—for a whole generation.

Secondly, the men who at the present writing have policy-making powers in the new organization are pretty effectively enslaved by one big, common thing. The common thing which enslaves them is this: Segregation. *Segregation is the sine qua non of race relations in the South.* The framework of this thing (in which some of them say they do not believe), which they see as a necessity and which is expressive of a limited belief in democracy, enslaves them. In one of the most ringing declarations growing out of the series of conferences that launched the new movement, it has already been established that "the race problem in any southern community is complicated by economic limitations." And this is a euphemism for the recognized fact that the South cannot economically maintain anything "approaching an absolutely equal dual system" unless the facilities for whites are brought down to the present level of those for Negroes.

The very idealism of these men and women of goodwill is negated by the meanings of their own phrases: "the white South inexorably conditioned by cultural complexes"; "In both the physical and cultural heritage of the South there are certain cumulative and tragic handicaps that represent powerful factors in the

situation"; "the legal and customary patterns of race relations in the South, whose strength and age we recognize. . . ." Thus by their own utterances they cancel out the very measures that would bring the solution.

To speak of the enslavement of these men by their positions would be unfair and unnecessary. It might be pointed out, however, that only the very rich or those beautifully sane creative persons too frequently labeled "crazy" can go all out for liberalism (which, let it be said, is purely relative) in interracial relations in the South. Those whites who fall into neither category but are of gnawing conscience call themselves "farsighted." Among the Negroes this tight-rope walking is called "statesmanship."

The third basic contradiction in the proposed program of the Southern Regional Council is to be found in the avowed intention to solve sectionally (that is, in the South) a problem that is admittedly national. The "southernness" of this new effort is stridently insisted upon. In spite of the words—"It is also respectfully urged that the President of the United States appoint a national committee"—appended to the resolution launching the Southern Regional Council, there is no reason to believe that this insistence upon southernness has at all diminished. The statement framed by the Negro group in Durham makes reference to the South with unmistakable implications of the peculiarity of the problem to it, of its aloneness and exclusiveness, sixteen times. Such reference occurs in the white Atlanta Statement, which is one third the length of the Durham Statement, eleven times. The consistency of this attitude was remarkably adumbrated several months after the plea to the President of the United States when Dr. Gordon Hancock, who helped call the Durham

Conference into being, made a public remark to the effect that "it makes a lot of difference whether the Negro capitol of America is in New York or Atlanta."

The appeal for a national committee, coming as it does only in the end, seems an incidental second thought and rings extremely hollow. The gesture-like quality of such an appeal is obvious. What, indeed, was there to prevent the Durham-Atlanta-Richmond body from inviting multi-sectional representation to their conclaves? If a multi-sectional, national committee of both races was what was wanted, it could have been formed with as much ease as a wholly southern body. A national committee created by the group would have had as much authority as one appointed by the President, unless one appointed by the President was to be delegated (by him under his wartime emergency powers or by an act of Congress) the power of legal enforcement of its policies and decisions. And this, of course, would be an altogether different thing from a goodwill, propagandizing, conference-holding body. And if this latter thing—a committee with federally delegated power—was what the Durham-Atlanta-Richmond group wanted, then why did it not say so?

The answer is simple. The group wanted no changes in the conditions of the problem; it wanted a southern solution. The answer is to be found in such a remark as that made by Gordon Hancock, and in phrases from group declarations. "We appeal to the nation, in covenant with the South, to exercise wisdom and maturity"; "This is a rare challenge to the leadership of the South: to the white leadership to find new ways of cooperation and to justify increased confidence of the Negro leadership in the white South; to the Negro leadership to sense the difficulties involved. . . ." Almost every phrase is pregnant with dis-

trust of any leadership outside the South.

For the white South does not consider the black North safe, nor the ideas of the black North sane. Perhaps the white South does not know it, but the common people of the black South, the very ones who were not represented in their conclaves, consider the black North both safe and sane. The black South believes in equality now. The black South wants segregation laws abolished now. The black South wants an end now to the economic tyranny exercised over it. The white South would not know this if it could. It wants a strict devotion to "gradualism." The changes it must make, the relief which it sees as "inevitable" must come within the framework of the southern pattern. And these changes and this relief are short of full equality, which, the white South admits, is possible only by a compensating degradation of white levels, or a tripling of the South's economic wealth, or a complete breakdown of segregation.

In the light of present developments, there is something of potential danger to the Negro in the Southern Regional Council. The very conception of the Negro problem as one to be solved by the South alone is part of the old conceit that has kept the problem so long stalemated. It is the South's old cherished conceit that it knows the Negro and knows what to do about him. It is a conceit that carries an insidious implication that there is a fundamental, God-intended difference between black humanity and white humanity, and that this difference requires some special knowledge and sensibility to detect. This conceit is the demagogues' pet cliché.

But not all the men and women who have inherited the belief that the South alone knows the Negro and knows what to do about him are demagogues. Most of the important white men and women

connected with the Southern Regional Council are people of integrity and probity. Most of the important Negroes are sincere. But even men of honesty are frequently the dupes of the unscrupulous, and it is not hard to imagine the unscrupulous using the Southern Regional Council as a wedge to split Negroes on sectional lines. It is not hard to imagine appeals to the Southern Regional Council to speak out against the program of the NAACP and the FEPC—and, by the very reason of its sectionalism, it is not hard to imagine the Southern Regional Council speaking out. What is there to prevent the Rankin men, the Bilbo men, the Eastland men from finding encouragement for their positions in the program of the Southern Regional Council? What is there to keep them from their devilish work of preventing a solid Negro front? This is what they want. Is it also what the Southern Regional Council wants?

The men and women who formed the Southern Regional Council could have saved themselves the embarrassment of the question. They could have done this by remembering that we are a nation. Their plea to the President to form a national committee was incidental, as has been indicated. It should not have been so. Since the plea itself acknowledges the national nature of the problem, it should have been backed by concrete proposals embracing a national outlook, as evidence of a real democratic will. Some such proposals have already been discussed in the pages of this magazine; there are others. It is no part of this paper to discuss their relative merits.

But it seems likely that what the Southern Regional Council proposes to do could actually be done through some such national agency. On the other hand, by the very nature of its being, it is extremely doubtful that the Southern Regional Council can even hold the line

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against the reaction that is bound to set in when the war against the foreign fascists is done. The forces of that reaction are already gathering. What must be done now is to push ahead, to storm and defend advanced positions against segregation, discrimination, and racism, so that when the forces of the native enemy build themselves up for the counter-attack, no retreat will be made beyond the lines now—in the spring of 1944—held.

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J. Saunders Redding is professor of English at Hampton Institute, a frequent contributor to national magazines, and author of *To Make a Poet Black and No Day of Triumph*. The latter recently won the Mayflower Award as the best book produced by a North Carolinian in 1943.

As for the Southern Regional Council, *COMMON GROUND* is sure the problem of race relations cannot be settled exclusively from the top—from federal government operating downward without the co-operation of state and local agencies; but it is equally sure it cannot be solved exclusively on a local or regional basis. As Mr. Redding says, we are a nation. It will take us all—nation, state, community, individual. The program will have to be flexible enough to allow for varying rates of speed and courage on immediate firing lines, but its goals must be unequivocal and its central drive and conscience must be honest.

A Southern Regional Council could be very valuable within an all-over national attack on the problem. But until it and similar groups North and South come clean on ultimate goals and acknowledge that segregation is wrong and must go, we have not much hope for their programs. In some northern cities, the very persons who worked on interracial committees in a tension period twenty-five years ago now sit again on similar committees, faced by crisis

situations far sharper than those they faced then. Either their earlier advice went unheeded, or they worked merely to ameliorate surface conditions and did not come to grips with basic issues. Now the cumulative evils of segregation—of inadequate housing, of lack of recreational facilities and economic opportunity, of general second-class citizenship, of the humiliations of the spirit and the bitterness and fears of segregated living—lie before their communities like an unexploded time-bomb. It will take men of honest, unblinking courage, North and South, to pull the fuse.

Since Mr. Redding's criticism was directed at one specific interracial organization, the Southern Regional Council, *COMMON GROUND* asked for brief comments on his piece from several white southern leaders, both within and without the group. Mr. Virginus Dabney, editor of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, was unable to comment because of previous writing commitments; Dr. Howard W. Odum, director of the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina, suggested it might be better to ask some of the Negro leaders in the group to comment instead; Lillian E. Smith, co-editor of *South Today*, well-known to CG readers for previous articles in these pages, sent us the discussion which follows. "These statements," she adds, "imply no personal criticism of the men who are shaping the policies of the Southern Regional Council, to many of whom I and all Southerners are indebted for long difficult years of leadership and service to the region. My regret is that the Council and certain other southern liberals have not shown in their publicized statements of recent months the range of vision and forthrightness of expression required by the world crisis today in which the South is so deeply implicated."—Ed.

## SOUTHERN DEFENSIVE -II

LILLIAN E. SMITH

THERE is no one way and no easy way to change a people and a people's life. One has to begin where one can, as a knotted skein of yarn is untangled, by pulling here, there, loosening the whole now and then, working on one thread, then another, until the skein is at last unraveled. If some one said, "There is only one right way to untangle these knots; here—take this thread and work only on it until the whole is untangled," we would think the adviser downright silly. Yet again and again, South and North, we are told that there is "only one way" to do the race job. The economic way, some say; the political way, others say; the educational way, and so on. The important thing to ask about improving race relations is not how we should begin, but what it is that we are trying to do. Do we want the tangled race skein completely unraveled? Or don't we? Are we merely trying to avoid more race riots and lynchings, more "tensions" which embarrass white folks, or are we trying to secure for the Negro his full human rights? Do we want human equality for the Negro or only a better reputation for the white man?

If we believe in human equality, we cannot believe in segregation which dehumanizes people. Christianity, democracy, psychiatry affirm, each in its own idiom, this basic fact: that men cannot cut themselves off from each other and live creative, sane, good lives. Segregation is not a Southern Tradition, a regional problem; it is the basic problem of every human being on the face of the earth.

It is a problem of personality growth, of culture, of world peace, of life itself. And it is a problem which every man has to solve in his own life before he can achieve emotional maturity and "goodness."

Therefore it is difficult to believe that any group is "doing good" when the fundamental ideology of the group is a regressive belief in segregation, a belief announced with the flourish of trumpets. It is difficult also to believe that any individual in such a group is "doing good" when he publicly proclaims a belief in a segregation that he would be ashamed to practice in his private life. Many of the white liberals of the South often eat with Negroes, often break segregation taboos; yet publicly they state that "segregation can never be changed in the South," that "whatever is done for the Negro must be done within the established segregation pattern." They declare in their public statements that they do not believe in "social equality" (whatever bad thing that is), yet they often practice, in private, democratic decency in their human relations with Negroes. One wonders what this kind of schizoid behavior does to men's souls, and minds.

One wonders—and one knows.

I, too, am a Southerner; I know all the temptations not to speak out, all the fears, rational and irrational, which burden us when we do speak out: the fear of losing jobs, losing prestige, losing friends, the fear of "doing more harm than good," of "causing racial trouble." I know these old, old fears, as does every other Southerner. But the time has come for us to know

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new fears: to fear what this kind of schizoid behavior is doing to our emotions; to fear the effects of such dishonesty on our character; to fear the deep psychic bruises that such public betrayals of our friendships with Negroes inflict on the Negroes themselves. How must a sensitive Negro feel when a white friend with whom he has dined, with whom he has talked in decent camaraderie, makes in public such statements as these! The white man is paying a high price for his regressive ideology of segregation; not only in poverty, low wages, wasted land, ignorance, but a personality price that if once fully appraised would terrify him.

Dr. Howard Odum often speaks of "good men in the South doing bad things." Would it not be more exact for us to say "men who wish to be thought good, doing bad things"?

It is a great pity that we Southerners find it so difficult to understand ourselves. Most of the "liberals" speaking out today in the South were born during that bitter and black decade of our history when white Southerners lynched a thousand human beings; when the poll tax was imposed on our people; when Jim Crow was enthroned; when a heavy fear and hatred hung over men's minds. They received their color-conditioning at this time, when they were small children. They learned in this highly emotional context about race, and they learned from the people they loved most. They learned, through deep feelings, that segregation is right, just as they learned that incest is wrong. The one taboo arouses as many fears in their hearts today as the other. And when one breaks the taboo of segregation—in the secret, sly way most of us Southerners feel forced to break it—one feels a profound sense of guilt which almost compels one to say again and again from the house-tops that segregation is "here forever," that it cannot be

changed. Today, when liberals down here say, "the white South [is] inexorably conditioned by cultural complexes," they are actually talking about themselves, translating into vague, grown-up, half-scientific jargon their infantile learnings and fears.

It may be startling to say it, but what we southern liberals need, perhaps above all else today, is to "put away childish things"—in that profound sense of rejecting those parts of our early training that were based on fear and prejudice and guilt, not on scientific truth and love. It is hard to reject the teachings of our early childhood without rejecting the beloved people who did the teaching. It is hard, but it can be done; and it is the "unfinished business" of southern liberals.

As to the Southern Regional Council and its specific program, I cannot speak with authority, for the editors of *South Today* were not invited to participate in this Council; nor, as far as we know, was any other white liberal in the South who had taken a public stand against segregation.

But even though I was not present at any of the meetings, I have talked with many individuals who were there and have read carefully the official statements issued to the press. After evaluating all I have heard and read, I am left with the feeling that not much is going to be done to bring about racial democracy by this group until its leaders accept and acknowledge publicly the basic truth that segregation is injuring us on every level of our life and is so intolerable to the human spirit that we, all of us, white and black, must bend every effort to rid our minds and hearts and culture of it. Men too faint-hearted to speak out publicly for human equality will not find within themselves the courage to make the journey along the tortuous road we must travel if we are to secure for ourselves, in South

and in North, a sane, democratic pattern of life.

It isn't so important how slowly some go, how rapidly others go. The important thing is: do we know where we are going and are we willing to tell the world our destination? One remembers how lost men tend to go around in circles, and one fears that some of the southern leaders of the Council, however sincere and able they may be (and they are both), are the lost generation of our South.

It is a pity that the Southern Regional Council was given so much publicity in race-relations terms. If they had only said in the beginning frankly, "We are not working for racial democracy. This is not our purpose. Our purpose is to improve the economic life of our region, to help raise, wherever possible, the levels of our people's life (black and white) whenever it can be done without upsetting the basically undemocratic and inhumane patterns our demagogues, our economic exploiters, our own fears and guilts have imposed upon us. This pattern, we think, is here to stay. We have no intention of trying to change it. But whatever we can do within this pattern to ameliorate unhappy conditions, to bring more prosperity to our people, we want to do." If they had said this, and seen to it that the movement was not advertised as a race-relations movement; then the Southern Regional Council might have been accepted for what it basically is, and not evaluated in terms of what it is not.

But, unfortunately, it did not happen this way. It was promoted as an "answer" to race tensions, to race riots, to the Durham Statement. It seemed to the public to be a direct outgrowth of the Atlanta meeting of "influential Southerners," though actually it had been planned long ago by a special group. This deliberate publicity—and it was deliberate—raised

hopes among the naive and uninformed whites North and South, and hurt sensitive, intelligent Negroes to the bone, causing many to become deeply embittered. It is stupid to accuse the leaders of the Southern Regional Council of evil motives as some cynics have done. They are not conscious hypocrites, nor have they sold out to any vested interests. They are men and women whom money can not buy. But they are confused. And confused people can do harm that they do not intend.

That is why some of us are so troubled. For, by their widely publicized timorous arguments, these "liberals" are furnishing in mass-production quantity, from their arsenal of fear, powerful weapons which can be used and are being used by less scrupulous and "smarter" men who know where they are going and whose path is not leading toward racial democracy.

But there are other leaders in the South who believe segregation must go before any people can find a good life for themselves; who cherish with their minds and their spirits the concept of human equality; who prize it so highly that they are not willing to give up big ends for little ends. They are not faltering at this time. They are speaking quietly, unequivocally, for the basic human rights of every man. And there are thousands of these Southerners. They do not have access to the southern newspapers; nor to many northern papers; they are not asked to become members of the Southern Regional Council. But they are here in the South: some rich, some poor; some as highly educated as the South can boast of; some as talented: sane, stable, thoughtful, sensitive, mature men and women of influence. If there is hope for the South, it will lie in these people who know where they are going, and who are taking along with them enough courage to see them to the end of their journey.

## TWO WORLDS

ALPHONSE HENINGBURG

THERE were only two barbershops in the small northwestern town in which I went to college. Since both were rather crowded during afternoons and evenings, I chose mid-morning as the time for my first hair trim in the new setting. The shop was clean and attractive, and the barber at the first chair looked up with a cheerful "Good morning" as I entered. I sat for a few minutes waiting my turn and continued to read a Spanish play which was one of my assignments for the afternoon. The barber whose customer I became was evidently of Spanish descent, for after having noted the book I was studying, his "*Buenos días, señor*" greeted me cordially as I took my seat in his chair. An air of friendliness developed and we talked about some of the better-known Spanish writers and artists. To my surprise, he was acquainted with many of their works, and he was also well informed on life in Latin America.

The conversation was both interesting and informing for me, although I had a little difficulty at times understanding some of his Spanish phrases. The discussion turned in my general direction after a while, and I mentioned casually that I was perhaps the first Negro student to attend the college. My glance into the mirror caught his expression of surprise and bewilderment. With hands raised above his head and in a tone of incredulity, he demanded: "You mean to tell me you're a Negro!" I admitted that I was.

"Why I can't cut your hair!" he gasped.

There I sat with the job half finished,

with the probability that it would never be finished—at least not in that town. And the nearest city in which Negroes lived in numbers was fifty miles distant.

We discussed my predicament. In spite of our quiet tones, I knew we were attracting the attention of the other barbers and the patrons of the shop. I finally persuaded him to finish the job, but he did it with much reluctance and with a great show of effort. He knew the temper of the community; he was probably in danger of losing his job if it became known that he had trimmed a Negro's hair. All our fine conversation about Calderon and Lope de Vega, all the mutual interest and friendliness that had developed, was swept aside by the almost unbelievable fact that I had entered the other world of color. There was no question of courtesy or decency involved, and the fact of my being a college student did not weigh in my favor. I was a Negro and, as such, immediately lost claim on the hospitality of the community. For me, such a simple and indispensable service as having a hair trim was denied.

My first impulse as I left the barbershop was to leave the town, to abandon my plans for attending college. If the presence of a college in this town for almost a hundred years had left the community so lacking in human understanding, would I not be wasting my time by remaining? Was not the process called education simply a veneer under which men feared and hated one another, employing smoothly turned phrases to conceal their

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thoughts? Did not my experience give bitter proof of the fact that white America lives with smug complacency in one world, while it forces black America to live in another, where the leitmotif is segregation and discrimination?

Fortunately for me, a letter from the philanthropist who had sent me to college had been brought in during my absence—a letter which stirred me deeply and gave me much needed encouragement. “You need not expect smooth sailing,” he wrote, “and at times you will be very lonely. But what you learn will be worth much more than any temporary inconvenience to which you may be put. *I know that you will make good.*”

A fellow just doesn’t quit when his friends talk like that. I stayed. With grim humor, I outlined a plan of action to another Negro student who came the following day. We purchased clippers and shears and became our own barbers. The results of the first operations were both disappointing and comical. Few things can make a man look more ridiculous than having his hair improperly trimmed. This farce went on for four long years—years during which I was more than once tempted to thrust this question into some academic discussion of democracy: “Would you believe it true that a Negro is unable to get a haircut in this enlightened community?” We two Negroes were aliens, painfully attempting to make the adjustments demanded of us. Between ourselves we treated the whole question with mock seriousness, not because we were light-hearted buffoons, but because we wanted to hide even from ourselves how deeply we were hurt.

While the barbershop incident was still fresh in my mind, I made another discovery which was profoundly discouraging. I was living in the home of one of America’s great humanitarians. He had come

to America as an immigrant when he was in his early twenties and had, by the time I met him, come to be a great scholar and a well-known writer. In an attempt to develop more friendly thinking on the matter of race, he had his students tell how they felt when the word “Negro” was mentioned. “You need not sign your names,” he said, “or indicate in any fashion who you are. But I should like you to put down as clearly and as concisely as you can the kind of thoughts you have when you hear the word ‘Negro.’”

There was a common thread of agreement in these statements: “When I hear the word ‘Negro,’ I feel a strange kind of resentment, and I think about things which are not pleasant.” “The very mention of the word ‘Negro’ makes me see red, for I think of all the problems which the people in my part of the country face because we have to put up with these people.” “Negroes are an awful nuisance in my community—at least all those that I have known. It would be a great thing if all of them could go back to Africa.”

The students who had thus frankly expressed themselves were perhaps members of my own classes, were students in the college which I was learning to love. My heart sickened. What had happened to make them feel so harshly about Negroes, whom I knew to be friendly and courteous and sympathetic, who were just people like themselves? I thought of something Charles Lamb once said. When asked if he knew a certain person he had ridiculed, he replied, “Know him, of course I don’t know him. I never could hate anyone I knew.” The experience of these boys had kept them completely apart from the Negroes they were writing about. There was hardly a one who seemed to think about Negroes as if they were much like themselves.

## COMMON GROUND

I am older now and my college days are behind me. Lately I am encouraged to note that more and more young America is recognizing the necessity for people everywhere to come to know each other better. Young Americans are beginning to understand the futility of discrimination and of hatred and are eagerly seeking to establish better patterns of human relationships. Quite recently I was asked to serve as forum leader in a two-day conference with young college students from several southern states, alert, eager, and filled with a desire to prepare themselves for effective living. At the close of the session one afternoon, two of the young women who had earlier volunteered to assist me in meeting the different leaders of the conference and in seeing that the clerical work I needed to have done was given attention, came up to me. Neither was acquainted with the city and they wanted to spend the hour remaining before dinner in as interesting a fashion as possible. When I mentioned that my sister was coming for me, one of the girls suggested they would like to go home with me to meet my sister and mother if this were possible.

I realized such a visit would mean an entirely new experience for them—one they probably would not wish to tell about upon returning to their own homes. But I was not prepared for the extreme surprise in their faces as they entered our living room. These gracious young women, entirely at ease in the conference atmosphere, now appeared awkward and ill at ease as they glanced about the room. There was nothing in the least unusual about it, as far as I could tell. It was neat, the furniture had been carefully selected, and the late afternoon sun traced a lace-like pattern on the wall. "Why," stammered one, "I had no idea that colored people lived in a house like this. Why,

your living room looks just like ours!" My sister asked the other if she had ever before visited in the home of a Negro. "Well," she answered, "there are a lot of colored people who live on our land, and I've been in some of their houses, but, of course, they really live in shacks. Do you know," she continued, "my father and mother just wouldn't believe that colored people live in a house like this?" Their inspection proceeded to the pictures on the walls, and they became much interested in a couch and a chair my mother had recently upholstered. "Do you mean," they asked, "that you selected the patterns and actually did this work yourself?"

Obviously they were reluctant to believe that any Negro woman was capable of using the kind of good taste the entire atmosphere in that room suggested. They were as friendly as ever, but they could not repress their astonishment on this first visit to the home of a middle-class Negro family. This for them was a new world, one they had never expected to enter. Without knowing it, they had been conditioned to associate Negroes with slovenliness and disorder. Here they found themselves talking with quiet, mild-mannered persons much like themselves, who neither shouted boisterously nor sang spirituals. They were probably well acquainted with the literature of the 17th century and understood fairly well the political history of our country, but they had no real knowledge whatever of the Negroes who lived in their own towns. They had seen colored people, of course, but all their lives they had strictly observed the taboo which decrees that persons of the white race must not come to know or seek to understand those who belong to the Negro race. I thought how needlessly their experiences were being restricted, how many happy, courageous young Negroes they could have come to know, with

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whom they could have developed splendid friendships, if the opportunity had but been presented.

I was very much moved by a letter from one of the girls a few weeks after the conference was over. "I enjoyed the conference very much," she wrote, "but I need not explain to you that the high point in the entire two days was the visit to your home and the opportunity of meeting your mother."

Persons of mixed blood frequently occupy an unenviable position somewhere between these two worlds of color. While their skin coloring and bearing at times enable them to escape the petty injustices heaped upon their brothers and sisters, this seeming escape also has its dangers, as I have discovered.

I found it necessary one day to travel some distance by trolley in a strange city in the South, and I spent several minutes determining how best to board the car. There was then no uniform practice in the separation of the races. There was always segregation, but in some cars Negroes were seated in the front, in others in the rear. If whites boarded one end of the car, I would get on at the other, I decided; while if Negro passengers came along, I would follow them. But the solution was not as easy as I had hoped. To my consternation, I was the only passenger.

Relying partly on knowledge of prevailing custom in other cities, I entered the rear of the car—only to find I was in the "white" section. I could have stayed there, for there were several already seated who looked less like an intelligent American than I did. But my desire to follow the conventions as literally as I could led me to creep cautiously into the cubicle set aside for Negroes. Unhappily for me, the conductor had observed my entrance. His face flushed a dull red and, with his finger extended immediately under my

nose, he growled: "Are you a white man, or a nigger? If you're a white man, go sit in the back of this car! If you're a nigger, goddam it, don't come walking through the back end of this car!" My first feeling was that I was neither, but I surmised he was not one given to listening to logic. Whereupon I took my first intelligent action in the entire episode: I paid my fare and left the car.

Often, of course, people of even the same race live in two different worlds. During the summer of 1943, when the nation was urging everyone to can every possible garden product, a meeting was called in a town I know to discuss the problems faced. "But these mill people," complained one earnest young woman, "just don't seem to co-operate. They don't come to the meetings, and they don't seem to want to co-operate." The ensuing discussion brought out the fact that there was practically no social contact between "these mill people" and the other residents of the community. They lived some distance away in tiny houses which were annoyingly alike, crowded close upon each other, with great open spaces extending in every direction. To make matters worse, many of the mill workers had only recently come to live in the town. The older community had not set out to segregate these newcomers, but the distance between their two worlds, inhabited here by persons of the same race, came out in the phrase "these mill people."

The two worlds are an infinite distance apart when the segregation is imposed by law and sanctioned by tradition. Anyone who violates the tradition incurs the ill will of the entire community and may find it impossible to go on living in that area. Therein lies one of the greatest evils of a prescribed segregation: it denies like-minded persons the opportunity to work together, and thus many of the commun-

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ity's best resources are lost to it. It is a painful truth that the communities which commonly deny themselves this service are those which most need it.

About five years ago, a university professor and his family moved from a northwestern town to another section of the country. His wife, sensitive to the low standards of living which prevailed in the Negro community, decided she would like to offer her help. To this end, she talked with several of the Negro "leaders." Knowing that the breaking of bread together is one of the oldest friendly institutions, she invited four or five of the better-known Negroes to her home for dinner. To her surprise, all of them refused the invitation, and each refusal was eloquently evasive.

Not only did those she invited fail to accept her hospitality; her neighbors learned of the invitation. A tempest of indignation burst upon the town. A meeting was called to discuss ways and means of forcing "the awful creature" to leave the community. Fortunately, the national reputation of the professor served as a guarantee against any violent action. The neighbors, all of whom were prominent in church life, finally found it discreet to forget the painful incident, though they swore never to forgive the offender.

When, later, the professor's wife, who had obviously taken literally the story of eating "with publicans and sinners," told of her experience in an interracial meeting, a painful and stony silence fell upon all present. The tension increased when an attempt was made to persuade the group to take a more friendly attitude. "Not only is this situation un-Christian in a so-called Christian community," said the speaker, "but it violates my fundamental rights as an American citizen. Do I not have the right to invite whomever I wish to my own home? These were all respectable people, some of whom are

here now in this very room." The Negroes referred to forthwith began to tremble in their boots, for they feared direct reference would be made to them. The situation was saved by the hasty and noisy departure of the secretary of a home mission society, who suddenly remembered she had an important engagement elsewhere. Her leaving was a signal for the interracial council to go home for the day. Not for a full twelve months did this body reassemble.

The "guests" involved knew better than most that these two worlds are now like darkened ships which travel the same seas, but between which there is no means of communication. They wanted to shield the gracious, Christian newcomer to the community, and they wanted to conform to the community pattern. They had learned long before the wisdom of the old Chinese saying: "Walk softly; go far." Though so softly is this walking done at times that no motion in any direction is discernible. The figures simply stand, naive and cautious, bowing from the waist. Half their time is spent in proving that all is well in both these worlds, and the other half in restraining their younger brothers, who are fiercely determined to be on the march.

Many of this younger generation seek immediate change even at the risk of calamity. Fired by the tremendous struggle which the entire world is now making to find a better way of living, they frequently despair of being included in the new order. All about them they find abundant reason for discouragement. Frequently they have engaged in years of preparation to follow a given occupation, only to find the doors of opportunity shut in their faces. Wearing the uniform of their country, they have been insulted on the very streets of the cities they are prepared to defend. Said one of these whom brief experience with the armed forces had left

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disillusioned and bitter: "This thing makes me mad. How can any one expect me to cross the seas to North Africa, and to fight for the freedom of people everywhere, when I can't get a decent chance to live in my own town? I've decided I'm ready to give my life to help straighten this thing out here, because, as far as I can see, Jacksonville, Florida, is just as near heaven as any point in North Africa."

We who are older seek to make these frustrated young people restrain their feelings; yet we realize with deep sadness the truth of what they say. Perhaps we realize, too, how completely we have failed them; so busy have we been making all the obsequious adjustments we feel necessary to our own security that we have entirely neglected the great challenge of giving them adequate leadership. These young Negroes—students, workers, and soldiers—have lost completely what little respect they did have for their elders who continue to insist that everything will be all right, that all we need is patience. With the clear-sighted vision characteristic of youth, they have sensed that the forces of democracy are stirring throughout the world, and they are insistent that their America, too, be included.

There is a pathetic quality about many sensitive souls who live in one or the other of the two worlds of color, who wish so desperately to know their neighbors a bit better. Such a young woman was a member of one of the better-known white families in Tuskegee, Alabama. This quiet, sleepy little town would be like many others but for one striking distinction. It was to Tuskegee that Booker T. Washington went in 1881 to establish a school for Negroes. In the early '20s a Veteran's Administration Facility, with some 2,000 beds, was located nearby, and quite recently the Army built an air base for

Negroes in the vicinity. So it happens that not only does the greater portion of the money in circulation pass through the hands of Negroes, but Booker Washington's work has given Tuskegee Institute an international reputation.

Yet this young woman lived her first seventeen years in the town without ever having seen Tuskegee Institute. Then she went to California, where she eventually became a successful dress designer. Twenty years after she had left Alabama, she returned for a brief visit. During this visit, a teacher of home economics invited her over to the Institute, and subsequently she made a brief address there.

Before an audience in which sat many well-known persons from different parts of the country, she told this story: "I did not leave my native town of Tuskegee until I was nearly 18, but never did I visit these grounds until last week. This must sound strange to many who have come hundreds of miles to visit with the great George Carver, or to see the shrine of Booker Washington. But my people did not want me to come out here . . . perhaps they were afraid that I would catch something. I don't blame my folks for feeling as they did, but now that they are gone I realize how much they missed by not knowing this school. Perhaps all of us would have caught something, and I feel sure we would have been better people if we had."

All of us need to "catch something" to help us toward a way of life in which every man is permitted and encouraged to make his full contribution. But it is impossible to understand your neighbor if you never come to know him; and you can never know him if you live in one world, while he lives in another.

There are perhaps some of my readers who will seek deliberately to misinterpret these simple statements, who will pre-

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tend that my sole purpose is to eat at table with some white person. During the years, I have come to know hundreds of persons of the white race whom I would feel honored to have sit at my table. Many have made a contribution to world culture, and any contact with them would leave me stimulated—even inspired. But when I think of the thousands I have observed who were not particularly intelligent and who were at times repulsive in their very person, I cannot bring myself to the point of believing that I would like to have lunch with them today or tomorrow. In any event my choice would be based on compatibility, on a commonness of interest, rather than on skin coloring or racial heritage. The logic of this position makes its very mention perhaps unnecessary, but those who draw the red herring of “social equality” across every discussion relating to race in this country do not employ logic. One of our Senators, in denouncing the effort made to upgrade Negro firemen, tells of “old Uncle Bill,” whom he loved more than he did his mother and his father. “But I did not want him to eat at my table and sleep in

my bed, and he did not presume to want to do it.”

Uncle Bill is probably embarrassed by the Senator’s utter lack of filial devotion, and horrified at the thought of sleeping in the Senator’s bed. But he would welcome the opportunity to live like a man, in honesty and in dignity, and he would weep for joy if the Senator loved him less but paid him a decent wage.

In this, Uncle Bill and I are representative of many other Americans who would like to see all men free from patronage, and all men freed from exploitation; who know that for the final peace and good of this country all men must be free to reach out to each other across the barriers of color and so learn that their two worlds are ultimately and inevitably one.

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## ROLL CALL

*Of all nationalities, of all races, and of all religions—these are our American armed forces.*

# THE CONDITIONS OF ENDURING PEACE

ARTHUR E. MORGAN

THE NATIONS of the world, including our own, have long proclaimed they want enduring peace. Why don't they get it? Because, since they cannot have everything they want, they have chosen what they want most, and it is not enduring peace.

If the conditions necessary for lasting peace should be clearly presented and clearly understood in America, a very considerable part of our population would feel that, convenient and pleasant as peace might be, occasional war would be preferable. I do not believe any such choice lies before us at the moment. The effects of the past can not suddenly be wiped away by any quick decision. Yet if, on the one hand, our country should be thoroughly convinced that the present war would last as much as ten years, that it would cost the lives of five or ten times as many citizens, that the tax on our own and world resources would be correspondingly heavy; and if, on the other hand, we should be convinced that we could now have enduring peace by paying the necessary price, many Americans of all classes would be emotionally unable to accept that price and would allow war to come.

To talk of enduring peace as though it were something we supremely desire, to expect it, to assume that it will come, when we have no intention of paying the necessary price and of providing the necessary conditions, is self-deception, evasion of the issue. In the First World War we had a war to end war, a war to

make the world safe for democracy. The making of a real peace would have been a long and difficult job, requiring long-sustained interest, sacrifice, effort, and patience, and much change of attitude on our part. Military victory was only the first preliminary. Yet the American people did not have a picture of the preparation that was necessary, did not have the emotional stamina to sustain a long period of suspense and effort. We wanted quick action, quick decision, quick relief from strain, and that without sacrifice of our customary way of life; and we imagined something lasting had been accomplished. As a result of that attitude, the whole job must be done over under far more difficult conditions, and at far greater cost. During the First World War we did not face the price of enduring peace. We could not have everything, and we took what we wanted most.

Today we are repeating the process. Again we want the comfortable emotional feeling that lasting peace will follow the war. To feel that we had refused the conditions of peace, and so had made still other wars certain, would shock our self-respect. We are not ready to share responsibility for millions of dead and for world disorganization. Yet we still expect quick results. We have scarcely begun to think about the price of lasting peace. Our after-war plans are concerned more with a new dealing of the cards than with new rules for the game. Worse than that, anyone who dares to disturb our feeling of confidence and assurance by

discussing the real problem may be looked upon with great disfavor. Is he not undermining the public confidence?

## II

To state the actual conditions of enduring peace is not utopian. Rather it is the opposite, for they are so exacting and so severe as to dissipate any hope for their quick and easy fulfillment. The state of military and economic warfare which has existed through the centuries is deeply rooted in our cultural attitudes. What is utopian is to believe that just by military victory, followed by international organization based on military and economic power, enduring peace can be achieved, while the deep-seated causes of war still remain.

What then is the price of enduring peace? In principle it is simple. But its application to the many and varying circumstances of the world is necessarily complex and difficult, requiring constant exercise of impartial inquiry, imagination, understanding, patience, sacrifice, and judgment. That price applies alike to the relations between races, nations, communities, and individuals.

The price of enduring peace is this: that the chance at life of any man, or association of men, or of any race or people, and their standing among men, shall depend not on any entrenched possession or prestige or power or race or color or property or position; but only on their willingness, and their ability under fair and impartial opportunity, to contribute to the welfare of mankind. Enduring peace requires the elimination of all claims of preference or superiority or priority which are based on chance or force or privilege. It would not mean the end of competition or struggle for survival and for satisfactions, but it would mean the absence of all arbitrary or capricious advantage.

Japan conquered Korea and set up a Japanese-dominated government. There the Japanese stand, as the master race. They have the position of prestige, privilege, and power. Though the Japanese should dominate Korea for centuries, so long as arbitrary power should rule, so long as any Japanese, just because he is Japanese, would rank as superior to any Korean, regardless of relative ability, so long would causes of war be present.

When the Normans conquered England nine hundred years ago, they endeavored to subjugate people's minds as well as their bodies. They were partly successful, but never completely so. Civil war has chronically simmered and seethed underneath, even in England. More than five hundred years ago Watt Tyler and his fellow rebel leaders spoke prophetically when they said, "Good people, never will there be peace in England so long as there be villeins and gentlefolk"—that is, so long as some are born to serve and others to be served. The English labor party today has substantially the same platform. Our own American Revolution was a continuation of the rebellion against the Norman conquest.

Wherever the chance which men have at life, and their standing among men, depend on accidental possession or entrenched privilege or prestige or power, rather than on ability and willingness to use their opportunities to supply the needs of men, there we have the makings of war; and except as those conditions of arbitrary differences are removed, we shall not have achieved the conditions of enduring peace.

This is true in every relationship of life. It is true of national boundaries and the ownership and control of territory. National boundaries may be the result of prior possession or of some other accident of circumstance. But whenever those barriers cease to represent a reasonable

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recognition of relative human needs and values, they become causes of war.

When our forefathers took America away from the Indians, by the conventional standards of possession the Indians had clear title. Yet others wanted the land who could use it more fully. We regret the crudeness, the brutality, and the betrayal of good faith with which the occupation by Europeans was brought about, but does anyone doubt the general rightness of the result? One hundred and thirty millions now live in comparative comfort and security where half a million barely existed before, and the Indian population itself probably has not decreased.

A hundred years ago the United States took away from Mexico the better half of her territory. The manner of doing this left much to be desired. In the absence of world government there was no orderly process to require the transfer of land from a nation which was making little use of it to a nation that had great use for it. In the long-run appraisal of history, this act will be judged less by the particular methods used than by the fact as to which people could make the best and fullest use of this area. Even if the area had not been taken by war, mass migration in the end would have had the same result, and if there had been effort to prevent the settlement of those vast unoccupied lands by people of European descent, the arbitrary claim to sovereignty on the part of a nation which was not actually using the land would have been a real cause for war. The fact that Mexico claimed title first was not the controlling issue, though the degree of actual and reasonably prospective use by Mexico should have been recognized and respected.

Before we can have enduring peace, then, we shall have to give up the concept of absolute sovereignty over parts of the

earth's surface. Chance or prior possession or legal claim will not be enough. Right of occupancy of any portion of the earth must go to those who will make best and fullest use of it. Such a principle, intelligently interpreted, will give immature peoples time and opportunity for adjustment to the modern world, just as children are given time for growth. Recognition of the principle that possession must go with effective use is one price of enduring peace. But are we ready to accept the general application of this principle to all cases, not just to those in which we would benefit by its application?

At the end of the Russo-Japanese war Russia ceded to Japan the south half of Sakhalin Island. It was then largely wilderness. Today, I have been told, the arable portion of the Japanese half is a garden spot, the Russian half still a wilderness.

Japan, even with only one sixth of its land area cultivable, has an average population of about 500 persons to the square mile. Australia, with a somewhat similar proportion of usable land, has less than two and a half persons per square mile. Australia, with her two and a half persons per square mile, says to Japan with her five hundred persons per square mile, "Keep out, this is a white man's country." That attitude, arbitrarily maintained, is a cause of war. While such extreme differences of population pressure are perpetuated by force, there cannot be enduring peace.

Is it not perhaps our real platform that the white man has a favored position, that we are going to keep him there at any cost, rather than pay the price of peace?

Yet wherever and to whatever extent any great nation has lived and acted according to the conditions of enduring peace, that nation is strong in the present

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conflict. To whatever extent it has ignored those conditions, it is weak. The real strength of Germany is not in Hitler. He is using for evil ends a strength he found at hand. The real strength of Germany is the habit of the great mass of the people of working hard, of depending on production rather than on exploitation of each other, their habit of dealing honestly with each other. I refer now to the masses. The weakness of Germany is a streak of brutal, domineering insolence on the part of those in power, their assumption that Germans are supermen, that all other peoples shall be their subordinates. That attitude has made Germany the most hated nation in Europe. It is a source of weakness, not of lasting strength. Similarly, all over South America, in hundreds of towns and cities, Germans have been settled for many years, living among the people without claiming special privilege, producing for them or getting produced in Germany whatever the people actually wanted. As compared with the air of superiority and indifference of Americans, that attitude made firm friends for Germany. Then came Nazism, with its arrogant claims of German superiority and favored position, and with political intrigue in South America; now the half-century of friendship for Germany is turning into hatred.

### III

It may turn out that the conditions of enduring peace are also the conditions for winning the present war, that whichever side comes nearest to fulfilling them will also have the best prospects for victory. It may be that the greatest danger to each side is not the strength of the enemy, but its own weakness in not being willing to meet the conditions of peace. The less the difference between the Axis powers and the Allies in this

respect, the longer the war may last, the more millions of men may be killed, and the less conclusive may be the outcome.

Wherein lies the strength of the Japanese army? In part, it is in the fact that the army, most of whose officers have risen from the peasant classes, has taken the part of the common man against economic exploitation by Japanese big business. Kagawa, the pacifist Christian leader of Japan, told me that repeatedly he found himself working in harmony with the army, in that both were building up co-operatives among the poor in an effort to free the common people. Also, the Japanese are superior in industry, orderliness, thrift, and self-control.

Wherein lies Japan's weakness? The official Japanese religion, Shintoism, holds that the people are lords of creation, to whom all other peoples must bow in servitude. That feeling of superiority and the demand for a privileged position led to the brutal exploitation of the Koreans and the Chinese, who also resented the attitude of superiority of Europeans, and if treated as equals by Japan might have been her strong friends. As it is, they are her enemies, ready to take full advantage of any weakness she may develop.

The relatively decent treatment of the Philippines by America gives us a powerful position of respect and goodwill in the Far East. Yet it is jeopardized today because we seem to be following England's lead. Her contemptuous treatment of all Asiatics as inferiors may block a quick winning of the war. She has tremendously exploited India. For long periods she largely prohibited the manufacture of cloth there so that she could have a market for her mills. Laborers in English-owned mills in India have been treated almost as slaves and terribly underpaid. In the Scottish-owned jute mills of Calcutta, the total wages paid the Indian laborers often were only about an

## THE CONDITIONS OF ENDURING PEACE

eighth as much as the dividends taken out by the owners.

Yet in the First World War India stood loyally by England because of the promise of self-government and dominion status after the war. Gandhi was a leader in support of England; he did not embarrass her in her time of need. But when, at the end of the war, he urged the redemption of the promise of self-government, England's quick answer was the ruthless suppression of civil rights. Indians must be "put in their place."

At Amritsar, agitation for self-government led to a riot in which two Englishmen were killed and a woman missionary beaten. In addition to other brutal punishment, and to emphasize Indian inferiority, for weeks every person entering the street where the woman was beaten was compelled to crawl through it on his belly. A few hours after public meetings had been forbidden at Amritsar by verbal proclamation, a large, entirely peaceful meeting, mostly of rural people, was held a few miles away without permission having been asked. An English officer stationed soldiers with machine guns at the only door to the enclosure where the meeting was being held and, without warning or opportunity for the people to disperse, mowed down those inside. No resistance was offered. According to the English account, about four hundred were killed and twelve hundred wounded. According to the Indian account, the numbers killed and wounded were three times as great. The officer who ordered this massacre was retired on full pay. The British House of Lords formally protested even his retirement, and he was presented with a gift of \$100,000. The fundamental policy of England has been to hold its superior position and prestige at all hazards. Race discrimination has been a fundamental tenet.

So deeply is that spirit rooted in the

English mind that at one time the outcome of the war was endangered by it. Edgar Snow in the *Saturday Evening Post* for September 12, 1942, asserted the Indian issue was no less important to the Allied nations than the campaign in southern Russia. If India had been lost, the effect on China, and on the war itself, might have been disastrous. The Indians, he held, would no longer acquiesce in the status of inferiority to which the English have consigned them. No one in India, he said, believes England has any intention of freeing the country. Today's wartime promises have no weight because similar promises made under similar conditions in World War I were not kept.

The attitude of the Chinese toward the Indian situation was more recently expressed by Lin Yutang in a radio address. He said: "... the issue of India is not the issue of India alone. It is the issue of our war aims, which Churchill and Amery think ought to be delayed till after the war. . . . What does matter is how it affects the fighting morale of the one billion Asiatics in this war who are looking on. If it *appears* to the Asiatics and to the South Americans and the people of countries subjected by the Axis that we are fighting for empire and not for liberty . . . if faith in the integrity of our cause is shaken . . . the effect is worse than the sinking of a hundred warships and the loss of all the airplane carriers of the Allies. . . .

"Ultimately, only justice, not force, can settle the Indian question. If justice is not given to India now, the world will refuse to believe that justice will be given to the world in our peace conference. . . . The world war calls for leadership that rests on first principles, and not a leadership that is merely clever in political handling of expediencies."

I repeat again, the price of enduring

## COMMON GROUND

peace is the giving up of all arbitrary claims of superiority, prestige, privilege, and imperialism because of race or military power or favored circumstances. The war will not be won by the great nations alone, but by whichever side wins the respect, love, and loyalty of the many small or subject nations, and of men everywhere who have been made to bow to those who are privileged.

### IV

Let us look nearer home. Here the white man has claimed superiority because he is white. The Negro has been denied opportunity and status because he is colored.

During the First World War we called on Negro Americans to help save the world for democracy. At the end of the war they came back hoping to find some of the equality they had battled for, having been led to believe it would be theirs if only they submerged their special interests during the war period. Thereupon white men put Negroes "in their place." What happened in Mississippi and Arkansas was typical. With large cotton crops and high prices, Negro sharecroppers there would have had more income than usual. But it was the common policy of their landlords to keep this money away from them. A Negro who would undertake to defend his interest in court was in imminent danger of his life, and some who dared to do so were murdered. In some regions any white lawyer who would defend a Negro in court, in an effort to get the part of the crop due him, was also in danger of his life. United States Senator Leroy Percy of Mississippi, of one of the foremost old slaveholding aristocratic families, whom I knew personally as a man of fine culture and character, risked his social status to oppose this exploitation. His statements on the subject are a responsible historic

record. English treatment of India after the war and ours of Negro soldiers returning from the war were strikingly similar. Both were based on the axiom that the status of racial supremacy must be preserved at all costs.

All too few white Americans are aware of the depth of bitterness, resentment, and rebellion now growing in the spirits of Negro Americans faced with the gap between our slogans and our domestic performance in the war for the Four Freedoms. The colored races number far more than half the world's population, including most of the peoples of Latin America. They are tending to unite against white claims of privilege and supremacy. It is by no means impossible that, if denial of opportunity and status to the American Negro continues, we may come to have in this country a potential fifth column of thirteen million people. Whether we like it or not, here and elsewhere the price of enduring peace is that arbitrary discrimination shall be done away with, that every man and every race and every people shall have a chance at life and a status among men determined only by what they are and the part they can play.

### V

Is it not sheer wishful thinking to expect other peoples to be content with an arbitrary status of subserviency? Is there any people on earth which does not have a surge of hope at the prospect of escaping from inferior status? Was it not to be expected that Japan, when she had become able, would rebel against the status of inferiority which had been assigned her and try to win an equal chance at life? Would we not respect her less if she did otherwise? It is not realism to base expectation for enduring peace on the assumption that any people on earth will

## THE CONDITIONS OF ENDURING PEACE

permanently acquiesce in being exploited, in being discriminated against.

Forty million people in Java, treated as inferiors, were no help to the Dutch in war time. Fifteen million in Burma were no help to the English. They had been treated as inferiors, though Burma had perhaps the most humane culture in Asia. Three hundred million in India will be no help to the Allies unless they are treated as political equals and given their freedom.

The same principle holds within a country as between nations. Discrimination, special privilege—any position of advantage which does not represent the will and the ability to contribute to human welfare—these and enduring peace cannot live together. No matter how complete an Allied victory, the resulting peace will endure only to the degree that arbitrary superiority of status and privilege and power are given up.

Assuming the complete victory of the Allied nations in the present war, how could a will to lasting peace find expression? Clarence Streit's program of Union Now would not do it. That, in effect, would be a world dictatorship by the English-speaking nations. Imperialism and privilege have long spoken in the English tongue. The similar proposal of an American Century likewise would fall short. Dictation by America would still be dictation and privilege. Economic aggression by America and England is fatal to enduring peace, just as is the military aggression of Germany and Japan.

What then is peace? Not the absence of competition and struggle. A social order which did not tend to select the better elements and eliminate the less excellent would lead to degeneration. Perhaps the condition the world needs could best be described as dynamic peace.

That state of society will have certain definite characteristics. First, human rela-

tions will be motivated by goodwill, integrity, and fair play. Second, changes in the social, political, and economic status of individuals and of peoples will be made by orderly process or by general consent, whenever the merits of the situation demand. Merits will be determined by impartial, objective inquiry, and not by selfish indoctrination, propaganda, or special pleading. Such changes of status, when their merit is clearly established, will not be prevented or delayed by vested interest, violence, or entrenched position of advantage. Third, society will be organized so that the energies and efforts of men will supplement and augment each other, not cancel out in disharmony and conflict. Fourth, society will develop progressive standards of values, and standards for the disciplining of competition, as every civilized society tends to do. Competitors today are expected not to shoot each other from ambush or to poison each other's coffee. It is bad form to lie about competitors' goods, or about one's own. The conditions of competition become not less exacting but more humane. Higher types of qualities come to control, and the productiveness and the quality of human life increase because of such refinements.

Similar types of controls must operate in the machinery of world government, in international law, in all world police forces, all domestic legislation for social justice. Unless they are inspired and sustained and preserved by a spirit of brotherhood and goodwill which does not stop at the boundaries of race or class or nation, they will break down or become the instruments of clever exploitation.

As enduring peace comes, it will gradually find expression in world government and in surrender of absolute national sovereignty. There will be found orderly ways for changing national boundaries as the balance of human interest requires.

## COMMON GROUND

Immigration will be under international control for the general good. That may not imply indiscriminate migration. Tariffs will be similarly administered. Raw materials will be produced and distributed for the general good and will not be monopolized by individual nations.

Absence of arbitrary privilege will not mean lack of realism. Just as nothing is gained in a family by assuming that a three-year-old has the maturity of judgment of its parents, so nothing is gained by refusing to recognize actual inequalities among individuals and people. Realism will face actualities as to both equalities and inequalities, but it will strive for objective, impartial judgments, uninfluenced by privilege or force. So-called "backward" peoples will be given the minimum necessary degree of supervision, in a spirit of guardianship, with constant encouragement to develop self-reliance. Wealth, power, and prestige will be trusts to be administered for the general good, not private possessions to be exploited to maintain favored status.

Because the conditions of lasting peace were not met in the last war, we are now *skimming our country again of the cream of its virile manhood and subjecting it to the possibility of death.* That the Napoleonic wars shortened the stature of Frenchmen two inches by killing off the best was only the outward measure of a vast loss of strength, virility, and health. War is extremely dysgenic. It leaves the scrub stock at home to raise the next generation. Let a few million of the best young Americans be killed in the present struggle and centuries will not repair the damage.

Let such wars recur periodically because the conditions of lasting peace are denied, or, as an alternative, have the world policed by several million of the best of American stock, and the cost to the breed will continue high. War destroys morals, humane

sentiments, and fair play. It is the supreme waster of material and of spiritual resources. The millions of graves, the deteriorated breed, the brutalization of life, the destruction of resources—these are the price of nurturing fixed ideas, myths of racial superiority, economic privilege.

Nowhere in western Europe has there been more hopeless, more degrading poverty than in England during the period of Indian exploitation, and in Belgium and Portugal with which countries colonial exploitation was at its worst. In no part of America has white poverty been so extreme and degrading as where the Negro was most submerged. The luxury of imaginary superiority and privilege obviously does not help the average man.

We may deceive ourselves by self-congratulation and fine phrases, but the time is past when these phrases will deceive other peoples. China, Burma, India, Persia, Africa, Latin America and Negro America are demanding the works of peace, not just the words of peace.

The fact is, we live in a high-priced world. The price of enduring peace is very, very high. But so, also, is the price of not meeting its terms. One price or the other, or part of both, we shall have to pay. Any refusal to face that fact is the moral cowardice of wishful thinking. Our only choice is to decide which we will pay for.

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*Former president of Antioch College, where he introduced the famous "Antioch Plan" of co-operative education, Arthur E. Morgan headed the Tennessee Valley Authority from 1933 to 1938. Recent activities in addition to his engineering practice include the establishment of Community Service, Inc., which aims to promote an understanding of the significance, organization, and interests of the small American community as the basic unit of American life.*

## GETTING QUICK RICH

GEORGE AND  
HELEN PAPASHVILY

FOR good practical investment, that second winter I was in Detroit, I bought myself two live silver foxes at a fox farm.

I had \$500 saved up but every place work was going slow, so I thought now before I spend all my money away better put part in something to support myself.

I picked out nice pair of foxes and idea was man at farm would keep foxes there and, like he explained me, when they would have childrens and grand-childrens we could sell all for furs and make money. I paid for both together \$225 for a start and then each week to give the man couple dollars for their eating.

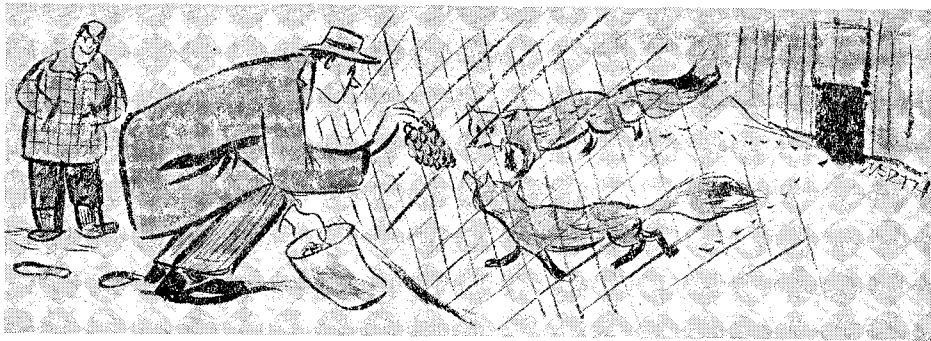
So now every Sunday I went to visit my foxes and I got to liking. One with

Only I was coming to see this was slow way to get rich.

On fifth Sunday man from farm phoned me over. "No use to come any more, buddy," he said. "Yesterday your foxes caught cold and both died."

Was a shock, but after I thought over a while I saw happened for the best. Because by now I was liking Mellushkella and Mr. Fox too much and I be sorry to see them killed or their childrens killed just to hang around a human being's neck.

Now \$275 was left. What to do? Better buy propitty, I thought myself. Propitty doesn't get sick; doesn't die. On holidays you take your friends to see and when you feel blue you can go and look at your propitty and cheer yourself up.



gold eyes I named Mellushkella and her husband I called Mr. Fox. I brought them fruits and pretty soon whenever they saw me they were glad in their fox hearts and pushed their long noses through the bars to eat grapes out of my hand.

So from a salesman that came in the Russian club I bought two lots in Pontiac. He showed us the propittys all on a colored map with names of owners and names of streets passing their lots and where gonna be parks and where markets. All printed down on map. "From such

## COMMON GROUND

propitty," he says, "gonna make little fortune."

\$250 was full price. No extras. I paid cash.

Now soon I got time I went in Pontiac to see my propittys and first I couldn't find. Was in a big field and I walked through slush covered over my shoes, but finally I came to my number painted on white stick beside a big hole full with deep mud. And that's my propitty!

In all the world only our water buffalo, Pretty, would like that place. Because Pretty could wallow away half a day in a swamp if you don't whistle a tune to bring her out.

But wouldn't be practical, right away I saw that, to have Pretty here from Georgia. Swamps as good as this one I bought are already plenty in Kobiankari and don't cost one penny.

So I went back to Detroit to my room.

Now lived in that house where I did, altogether on the top floor, me; couple Egyptian boys, Hassan and Ahmed; one Russian, Vallodia, my friend; a Cossack fellow, Ermack; and a Persian old man, never would tell his name.

Ahmed was cooking rice when I came in.

"Give me eat, boys," I said. "Nothing's left in my life. My foxes is dead and buried. My propitty's under water and my money's all gone only \$25." I told them story.

Ermack was sitting in chair reading funny paper out loud to himself in Russian.

"So." He jumped up. "You was cheated. Betrayed. Outraged. Deceived. All right! Ruined. Thinks maybe that agent you a nobody? A man without friends? All alone? We show him. Not so easy to cheat a man when Ermack finds out. Come on, boys. We going all in Pontiac, this night, and we getting money

back, every penny. Money back, or we have his life instead."

"Better don't kill," Ahmed said, stirring the pot furious. "Government in U.S.A. don't like."

"Money or his life," Ermack said. "I don't care which. Let him make own choice. All I know—for me friendship is sacred thing."

The real estate man, when we got there, was little surprised to see us so many, but he was very polite and put seats for all in his office.

"Certainly boys, certainly," he said. "Might be little damp, your friend's lot, just this present time. I don't deny. But now is winter. Lotsa rain. But in summer when everything dries up who's gonna have green grass lawn? Who's gonna have flowers big like cups? Who's gonna have fishes pond with lilies?" He pointed me. "You, my friend. You gonna have."

"Yes," I said, "but—"

"Besides," he said, "gonna be sidewalks pretty soon next week and with sidewalks come gutters. Isn't right? Gutters run water away. Dry up your lot. Six months you gonna double money for sure."

So he went on and on like a story teller from Imeretia who has no end to his tale but the start of another. And at last he talked so much Ermack gave him \$25, all he had with him, for a deposit on two lots and Vallodia promised to come next day and bring the lady he engaged himself with to talk over buying next door two more lots so he be neighbors to Ermack.

And so we came out and I still had my propitty and it was still under water and now only \$25 was left.

What to do?

"Let's we be practical," Vallodia said next day. "Think over. In America what's everybody doing all the time? Eating! If they no eating they chewing on gum to

## GETTING QUICK RICH

fool themselves they eating. Cook some kind of food and sell. Make big money."

But what to cook? We thought and thought. *Piroshkis*? *Scraporcella*, our nine-layered cake of goat's butter and pounded pistachios? *M'tswade* of deer haunch spitted and broiled? All no good. Finally we decided on *k'hinkali*.

For *k'hinkali* you take fresh bright beef piece, chop fine, cut onions and herbs over; put pepper, little; salt, little more again; water; mix all. Then you roll nice dough thin as oak leaf, put meat in, pinch edges all around and drop one by one into pot of boiling water and when pot goes plut—plut—plut—plut—is done. Take out, bite a hole in end, drink juice and eat meat and its coat. Ten, twenty—with good appetite man can eat thirty. That's *k'hinkali*.

The hard part is the dough. Vallodia said he knew how.

"A hundred times I watched my mother to make," he said. "In winter specially my father liked *k'hinkali*. In deep winter when the snow freezes over the top and we could hear the horses' feet crunch through with every step as my brothers came riding home. Then he liked to eat *k'hinkali*, my father. When it was so cold the church bells from Armavere sounded clear in our village—yes and the voices of the people singing when they passed in sleighs. Flour I need," he said, "and water and egg. That I know."

First time he tried turned to paste. Second time was more like putty; third time, chalk.

"Nothing to do," he said, "but ask our landlady."

So Annya Feodorovna showed us how to mix and we watched and came nice. We wrapped meat, cooked few. Excellent! Almost we ate the whole thing.

Now I packed few dozens in box and went out to sell to restaurants. But every

place they slammed door and wasn't interested to loan me simple pot of boiling water to prepare a sample.

Finally I came to Greek who cooked in Yalta and he was man who understood value of *k'hinkali*.

He tasted. "O.K.," he said. "I'm gonna take fifty dozen for trial. I'm gonna have banquet party tonight from Russians. You be here sure 6 o'clock with *k'hinkali*. Not one minute late and I pay you cash money. You no fool me. I no fool you."

So I ran home fast as a rabbit jack and my heart was as high and bright as the morning clouds on our Kazbeck's peak.

"We can't ask Annya Feodorovna no more," Vallodia said when I told good news. "So we do this way. Go you on other side of town to Russian bakery. Explain him problem. Buy good bag of dough and meantime I employ myself to mix meat. When you coming back we roll dough out and wrap."

The baker understood what I needed. He took piece size of head out of mixer and wrapped in paper. "Keep in cool place," he said when I paid him, "and you gonna be O.K."

Trolley was crowded and hot like a devi's cook oven. Long before we came even to Dickerson Street I could feel dough begin to grow under my hands. Man next to me got off and a lady sat down beside. By now dough was size of wineskin. I pushed down in few places and it was quiet for couple minutes. More people climbed in. My dough was breaking through the paper in the corners. No matter how I held still got bigger and bigger and again bigger. My God, I thought, pretty soon gonna fill whole trolley.

The lady next me acted nervous. Man over the aisle was watching my package with both eyes. It went up little more, almost to watermelon size. I tried to cover with my overcoat.

## COMMON GROUND

Woman leaned over from corner. Her hat feather stuck in my eye.

"You a Russian?" she said.

"No, madame," I began to explain. "I'm a Georgian. Not same. Different language, different—"



"He's a Russian," the woman screamed at her voice top. "It's a bomb." She pulled the emergency cord.

The trolley was in an uproaring. The conductor pushed back. "Wassa matter?"

Everybody pointed at me.

"Whatch you got there?" he said.

At this time I wasn't speaking English so goodly as I did later but I knew r-o-u-g-h makes English ruff—so d-o-u-g-h must come same.

"I got duff," I said. "Bag of bread duff."

Maybe everything still be O.K. but just in that minute the woman next me opened her mouth and yelled, "Help! HELP! It's crawling on me!"

My dough had broke its paper and was creeping across her dress.

"Please," I said, "please, madame." I got my dough under my arm. "Take. Buy a new dress. Only don't make such a noise. Please." I gave first bill my hand could find in my pocket. Ten dollar one. I got to door.

"And stay off the trolleys," the conductor said. "I could have you up for riot."

One thing only, thank God, in the cold air outside, my dough came to his senses and stopped growing. I could carry. But it was almost six miles home and even running part way the clock struck five before I turned into our street.

Now our landlady Anna Feodorovna's father was Admiral from Russian Japanese War and he had big brass bell hanging on each floor of house to remind him of his boat. Was supposed to ring for emergencies, this bell, like somebody falling down stairs and breaking legs, or electric blowing up, or bath tub overgoing, or winning sweepstakes, or something like.

So I rang this bell until almost I busted rope.

Then I leaned over bannister. "Come on up! Everybody!" I hollered. "Come on up and help make k'hinkali or we no gonna get finished."

Little lady, Madame Greshkin, music teacher, put head out her door. Luba, Anna Feodorovna's daughter, ran up from basement. The Admiral opened his room.

Up they came and we started in. Anna Feodorovna rolled. Vallodia and me, we portioned meat. Luba pinched. Ahmed and Hassan kept new water boiling. Madame Greshkin counted out dozens. "Adin y dwa y tre y chiterch," like for a song. ONE and two and THREE and four. His Excellency packed. Artash ran up and down and shoved boxes on the truck we borrowed.

## MAMA, WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

Only our Persian, he sat rocking in corner with a shawl over his head saying, "My God, My God, is awful thing, this, to happen to man in his old age."

Ten minutes to six we finished. I took to restaurant. Man paid me \$40 and I came home back.

"Now we figure," Vallodia said. "For meat was \$10 and for dough \$3."

"Ten dollars on trolley," I counted.

"And I bought bottle of wine each \$2 for boys, comes \$4. But can't give no bottle wine to Admiral from Imperial Russian Navy, so I bought him cognac instead. Six dollars."

"Can't give daughter of Admiral no bottle wine neither," I said. "So for Anya Feodorovna and Madame Greshkin, too, roses with sincere compliments. Six dollars again."

"And truck, and gas, and Luba and Artash to movies sit in loge seats—"

Vallodia thought a while. "You excuse me now," he said finally. "I gonna speak to you from the heart like a friend and I tell you these words. You no man for business, Giorgi Ivanich. You hafta look your luck some other place."

I counted out what was left from my \$500. One dollar sixty-seven cents cash money, and a street car token.

"Vallodia," I said, "in this case you over one hundred per cent right."

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*The Papashvily's are CG's prize exhibit as a writing team, a fusion of old-stock and new American. Their sketches are being gathered together by Harpers for a book tentatively titled, Anything Can Happen.*

## MAMA, WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

HUGH McGOVERN

I'M GOING to get the gun, said Milford.

An' what you goin' to do, child?

Going to kill.

Who?

Who? Whites. I want to see them down, and when they're down I'm going to shoot again.

Won't do you no good, child, said Verine.

Do me good. Do me good.

No good if you had a gun. I sol' it a long time ago. Don't do no good to kill. Killin' is spit in the wind.

I got to, Ma.

Get to yoh bed, son! How you talkin'. Who you got to kill? You know his name and address? How ol' is he? Who you got?

Some poh ignorant white with foh kids an' an ol' mammy?

Cop shot *him*, said Milford. Didn't ask *his* name and address.

God, God bless him, said Verine.

Walking along, said Milford, not even knowing the time of day. Coming home, Ma, with a bag of good stuff.

No moh, Mil. No moh, child.

In front of Greenberg's store, Ma. There was some scuffling and you know Pa. Stand an hour watching an ant. Run from nothing.

Said no need to run fohm anything. Said God didn't chase nobody.

You read it, Ma. Said he was looting. Saw the bag with pickles and jelly in it.

## COMMON GROUND

Cop let loose. Got him in the stomach and then tried for his head. Young cop. Nigger-hater.

Maybe he was scared a colored folks. Scared an' young.

Maybe Pa's sitting on your lap now telling us that, Milford said.

You just a child, boy, like he always tol' you. Maybe some folks die—I don' know. But not yoh Pah. He ain't the dyin' kin'. Shoh he's settin' here on my lap tellin' us. But he ain't mouthin' like you. He don't talk about what he goin' to do. He jus' unnahstan' natchally to begin with, an' he do what he mus'. He know you don't fight the dahk with yoh han's—but with yoh head an' yoh haht.

Is he telling how they're hunting us?

Who?

The whites. Like a big mess of sneer and hate.

They ain't huntin' you, child. They huntin' out their rottenness to kill it. They's moh childern than we. But someday evvyone fin' that what's no good is just in theyselves, an' we be free to go 'long up.

Go up where?

Where God means us to go.

We'll go up, Ma. We'll go up. We'll go up when they send us up. Like Pa.

Get to yoh bed.

All right, I'll take a knife. I'll wait in an empty lot up there somewhere, Ma, and when a white comes along I'll cut his

throat. Then I'll get drunk and go to another place and wait.

Yoh Pah wouldn't let you have no knife. You won't get none fohm this kitchen.

I'll teach them a few new things about hunting.

I won't cry foh you.

Cry?

Just a child. Who goin' to cry foh you? You scared. You see blood once an' you need someone to cry foh you to see it twice. Yoh Pah won't cry foh you. I won't.

I don't need anyone to cry for me.

Then go into the kitchen an' get yoh knife.

She stood before the entrance.

Get out of my way, Ma.

Push me out of the way, said Verine. You a man. Push me away an' get yoh knife an' go kill.

Milford's knees thumped to the floor. He embraced his mother's thighs.

What am I going to do?

Poh little child, said Verine. She patted his head.

Mama, what can I do?

I don't know, she said.

Mama, what am I going to do?

She pressed his head to her thighs.

You can stay alive, child, she said. Thass all I know.

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*Hugh McGovern is a young Michigan writer recently inducted into the Army.*

## FOOD FOLLOWS OUR FLAG

ALAN CRANSTON

MUCH has been written about the men from all lands who, united, pour their strength into the munitions industries and the fighting forces that make America a great power in this war. Little has been written about the men from all lands who in America produce the food that fights for freedom.

Millions who sprang from the soil of Europe and Asia dreamed in past decades of crossing the seas and owning a bit of the soil of America. Millions crossed the seas. Some went out on the farms at once. More went down into the mines, into the steel mills and the factories of our industrial machine. Only after long years of labor did some emerge with sufficient earnings to stake out their claims for permanence in America on her farming lands.

Today the intense desire for soil that brought them from afar blesses America with much of the food needed for total victory in our war.

From ocean to ocean east and west, from the Red River to the Rio Grande north and south, hands of all the nations are harvesting America's food for the hungry mouths of all fighters for freedom and all victims of tyranny. There are Americans from Czechoslovakia out on the giant wheat and corn fields of the Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, and Texas plains. There are Americans from Germany, Switzerland, and Scandinavia bringing forth rich dairy products beside the lakes of Wisconsin. Americans from Italy farming the apple and the olive groves,

the vineyards and the citrus orchards, the wide asparagus beds and the long miles of artichokes down the valleys of California. Americans from Poland who took over exhausted, abandoned farmlands in New England and nursed them back to health and to production of record crops of potatoes in Maine and of onions in the Connecticut valley.

In the Rocky Mountain states and farther east, throughout the Middle West, thousands of Americans of Japanese descent who were evacuated from the West Coast after Pearl Harbor have aided in augmenting the nation's food supply. They have gone into the fields to harvest potatoes, beans, tomatoes, apples, and long-staple cotton; but by far the largest number have worked in the sugar-beet fields, where the shortage of labor became most acute owing to the loss of local farm workers who went into military service and industrial employment, and to the slow-down in the movement of migrant labor.

At the peak of the 1942 harvest season, nearly 10,000 evacuees from ten relocation centers voluntarily assisted in saving thousands of acres of sugar beets. Among them were hundreds of workers who had never done farm work before—former office clerks and salesmen, mechanics and technicians, students, and even housewives. They are estimated to have harvested 990,000 tons of sugar beets which, when processed in the refineries, should have provided approximately 297 million pounds of sugar for American tables and

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the tables of our allies. This is a year's sugar ration for about 10 million people.

Again in 1943, American workers of Japanese ancestry aided in harvesting the fields and orchards of the West, and thousands more were employed on farms as far east as Michigan and Ohio. They were working on stock and poultry farms, in dairies, and helping in the fields of corn, wheat, and other grains through Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana.

While these workers were employed in food production in numerous communities across the land, others were clearing, planting, and harvesting the fields at the relocation centers. From the beginning, the War Relocation Authority has worked to make them as nearly self-sustaining as possible in food production. In 1943, the total production at the centers aggregated nearly 50 million pounds of potatoes, cabbages, turnips, and other vegetables, as well as large acreages of feed crops. All centers are nearly self-sufficient in production of pork, eggs, and poultry, and several are producing their own beef.

The sons and daughters of Ellis Island do more than sow and reap. They strengthen America's war food program in many other ways.

Intelligent use and conservation of food once it is produced is of the utmost importance. Twenty to thirty per cent of all the food in the United States every year is lost or needlessly wasted.

Immigrants, more than older Americans, know how to avoid food waste. Accustomed to a history of famine in their homelands, they have brought with them to America many food-saving techniques. Some were simple kitchen devices; others were of wider scope. In New York an immigrant group turned wasted food into a profitable industry. "Greenhorns" from Poland shook their heads when they saw

New York City paying men to burn refuse from the hotels and restaurants. Today they are raising swine in the shadow of skyscrapers—just across the Hudson on the New Jersey flats, where the pigs feed well on the left-overs from the banquet tables of Manhattan, and provide thousands of hams and pork chops for shipment back to the metropolis.

We all understand the need for food on the home front in this war. We all understand the need for food for the men and women of the United States Army, Navy, and Marines. But not all fully understand the full measure of the value of our food to our fighting allies—and to all the peoples of Europe and later of Asia as they are liberated from the Axis tyrants. New Americans do. They know much of barren soil and hungry people, and of the starvation and pestilence that follow in the wake of war.

They have been of great assistance to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in the development of plans to meet the food needs of the lands destined to be liberated by United Nations forces. Not all peoples eat the same things, and it would be wasteful to supply people with any food they would be unlikely to eat or wouldn't know how to cook. It has been possible to derive information on the general food pattern of each country from figures on import and export, and on overall production, but only with the assistance of America's foreign-language groups has it been possible to get further needed information.

Acceptability food tests now being conducted by the Food Habits Committee of the National Research Council in co-operation with nationality groups in the United States have clearly shown what food should be sent where, and have already altered several food specifications in the plans of UNRRA. In the course of

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the tests, nationality groups have made a number of suggestions for making food conform more nearly to the food patterns of their native lands. They have been particularly useful in experiments intended to create acceptable vegetable substitutes for the meat dishes customarily eaten in certain countries. They have proposed ways to vary the use of a single product, and they have devised recipes that will mix products available here with products available in the land to be relieved. Norwegian Americans suggested that a popular dish called "plukfisk" could be prepared satisfactorily from the soybean spaghetti and the ground fish loaf which had also been submitted for testing. Greek Americans discovered that a molded loaf could be prepared from the soup mix simply by cooking with less water and chilling.

The UNRRA will provide only the bare necessities of life. It is designed to get the freed lands back into production as quickly as possible, so that they can provide their own requirements in food-stuffs, clothing, shelter, medicines, and other supplies. Ships carrying bread to Europe will also carry seeds to grow wheat on liberated soil. They will carry fertilizer, insecticides, tools, and machinery. Walter Lippmann summed up the thinking behind this plan when he wrote: "What we are called upon to do will be done best if we do not think of the operation as an outpouring of relief. The much truer description of it is to say that we are asked to make available some working capital in order that these peoples may in a relatively short time be self-supporting once more. Relief in the sense of charity to the destitute is necessary but it is not the preponderant part of the business; the preponderant part of it is to supply them with enough working capital—food, seeds, tools, transport,

drugs—to enable the continent to get started again."

The provision of emergency food will supply strength for the hard work to be done. It will create health to ward off dangers of worldwide epidemics. As it permits the liberated people to produce new supplies of food and other goods, it will release greater power to the United Nations for the final defeat of the Axis. Production in the liberated lands will ease the strain on our supply lines. It will permit our ships to carry munitions instead of food.

The United Nations food policy is in direct contrast to that of the Axis. In four long years of war, the Axis has used food as a grim weapon of starvation, a weapon designed to force enslaved peoples to obey.

Now this Axis weapon is being turned against the Axis. Food for the liberated peoples becomes a potent weapon in the hands of the United Nations. The life-saving power of a loaf of American bread matches the death-dealing power of an American bullet. The OWI—often speaking through the voices of immigrants and refugees who came to America from villages the Nazis are seeking to starve—is telling the subjugated people of our relief plans. Messages out of occupied Europe inform us this is a tremendous stimulus to underground movements. It makes the people willing to risk their lives to get the United Nations there more quickly. It promotes sabotage, intelligence operations, guerrilla warfare. The enemy knows this. He is trying—unsuccessfully—to suppress the news that food follows our flag.

The men who led Germany in World War I learned the potency of food as a weapon. The leaders of the Nazi Reich, remembering 1918, resolved that no matter what the fate of the 250,000,000

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Europeans under their domination, Germans must not go hungry in World War II. Goering in October, 1942, revealed that the entire German army is fed from the conquered countries and bluntly said, "The German people come before all other peoples for food."

The Nazis robbed the fertile fields of eastern Europe of their richest crops and finest herds. They bled the Balkans of their produce, plundered the low countries of their livestock and dairy products, stole the fish of Norway and Italy, and the wheat of France. The offering and the withdrawing of food is a Nazi technique—based upon starvation—for checking revolt in the occupied lands, for exacting new levies of conscript troops, for "clearing" large areas marked out as German lebensraum, for executing Jews.

Within the border of the Third Reich itself, food control is manipulated to re-inforce loyalty, to stimulate zeal. It is the instrument whereby farmers are alternately bribed and coerced; whereby discontent is allayed and morale, shaken by air raids, is bolstered; whereby foreign workers are kept in line and opposition is starved into apathy.

The result of the Nazi starvation of Europe is measured in the death of millions of civilians, in the spreading of disaster on and on to the aged, the sick, the women and children who are suffering and dying from hunger and disease. But it is also measured by the dauntless spirit among the living: they are rising to drive out the Nazi tyrants.

And this ill-conceived Axis weapon will do more than aid in the defeat of the Axis. It will help the United Nations establish a new world—the sort of a world the Axis tyrants hated and feared and sought to destroy.

Herbert H. Lehman, Director General of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, said recently:

"To get what we are fighting for we must win the peace, and to do that . . . we must have the complete support of the millions now under Axis domination. Before any final settlements are made, these people must see their way through the period of bodily misery and political danger. We must help to prevent chaos and suffering, and help them begin again the national and individual lives that were interrupted by the lust of the aggressor powers. Unless these peoples are ready materially and spiritually to help us in the struggle for a just peace we shall find ourselves right where we were at the end of the last war—only in a temporary armistice, with the warmakers binding their wounds and planning to try again."

The more they understand this full significance of the war food program, the more the millions of Americans of recent foreign origin will contribute to its success. For American food fights not only for the freedom of America, but for the freedom of their native land—and the freedom of all the world.

All of us together are hardly strong enough to reap the American harvest; all of us together are hardly wise enough to use it to the full. Likewise no single nation possesses the resources to meet the problems that lie ahead. Therefore we are joined in the common effort to feed and clothe and house the liberated peoples of the world in the immediate wake of war so that in their own strength they may themselves achieve freedom from want. This step is a mighty one toward the achievement of enduring peace—the greatest enterprise facing man.

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*Formerly on the staff of the Common Council for American Unity, Alan Cranston since the war has been Chief of the Foreign-Language Division of the Office of War Information. He recently enlisted in the Army.*

## WHAT'S COOKING IN YOUR NEIGHBOR'S POT?

ROSALIE SLOCUM

THIS is the story of a war project which was born through urgent need, grew because it has fundamental human appeal, and now gives promise of becoming a potent national tool for combating inter-racial and inter-nationality tensions.

When the Office of Civilian Defense summoned the Common Council for American Unity to take part in the national "Food Fights for Freedom" campaign, few of us realized the program's potentialities. We only knew that here was a war project that must be supported—a basic program, all-inclusive, non-controversial. Since Common Council's concern for the past twenty-five years has been to interpret America to the foreign-born and the foreign-born to Americans of longer standing, its share in the food campaign would of course be worked out within this two-way frame of reference.

An exploratory conference on the "Food Fights for Freedom" campaign, in relation to the foreign-born, was therefore called at the Council's American Common on the fifteenth of November. Representatives of one hundred and fifty national "American" and foreign-language organizations listened with considerable interest to officials from the various government agencies responsible for the Food program. It might have gone the way of most conferences—an interesting afternoon to be carefully folded up and put away in its pigeon hole along with many other conferences that keep on occurring in the social welfare field.

But toward the end of the meeting there was a noticeable stir. The audience

milled around a table laden with samples of food—strange food, but tempting. It was being offered as the simplest way of explaining some of the concrete contributions the foreign-born housewife can make to the solution of the problems of the general American housewife in wartime.

The exciting thing that was happening, however, was not just the food itself, but the sudden warmth of atmosphere that had been created among the most unlikely fraternalists. A Polish American club woman and a thirteenth-generation member of an American society tasted with interest a Russian dish now known as the stand-by of the Soviet Armies as well as of Russia's civilian population. An Italian American welfare worker compared notes with the maker of a Czech lentil soup that could feed a family of six for sixteen cents. Food apparently was food and knew no political distinctions. Thus was born what was to develop into the pattern for a down-to-earth program to promote understanding among the varied peoples that compose New York City.

Quite quickly, a committee of experts was formed, mostly of people who had expressed interest in carrying further the ideas brought forth at the conference. It included an anthropologist who has made a special study of eating habits, nutritionists from New York City's official nutrition program, Board of Education representatives interested in consumer problems, and several people from the Department of Markets, the OPA and WFA and private agencies.

There was no precedent for what this

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committee proposed to do. It had to feel its way, step by step, until at last the plan unfolded itself. There were to be a series of nationalities parties. "What's Cooking in Your Neighbor's Pot?" they were to be called. The purpose was to present in detail the eating habits of the major nationality groups in this country, evaluate them nutritionally, discover how they are affected by rationing and other wartime exigencies, and suggest ways in which the American-born housewife and the foreign-origin housewife might profit from each other's knowledge.

In form, each afternoon was to be a tasting party. Samples of the characteristic foods of each nationality group were to be served, showing to what extent they satisfy the American nutritionists' "seven basic foods for daily good nutrition" requirements, and demonstrating also interesting ways of using foods currently plentiful and therefore of low, if any, point value in the local markets.

Obviously there must be a working committee of representatives of all the foreign-origin groups, for someone must work with the anthropologist, preparing the basic information, and someone must cook the food. Yet would these nationality groups be willing to work together, at a time when news from abroad tended to pit group against group in this country?

The results were amazing. This was the first time many of these women had been asked to participate in an American community project, except for money raising. They were more than eager to be drawn into general community work. To each and all of them, food was a highly acceptable basis for a common meeting ground. They were the first to recognize its universality and uncontroversial nature.

Twenty-five nationalities were soon drawn together, ready to begin. The first was to be a Greek party. The Greek representative on the central committee

organized a committee of responsible leaders in her own group who were to prepare and serve the food and be hostesses for the afternoon. The anthropologist and the nutritionists would assist them in working out the menu. As for the audience, it was to be provided in part by the other nationality representatives of the central committee, each one of whom was expected to bring three women leaders from her own group. The balance was to consist of leaders of civic and private agencies who would be able to adapt this program to their own work.

The response to the Greek party was impressive. It wasn't just the audience, which turned out in sizable numbers and tasted all the dishes with gusto. It was the underlying idea that captured people's imaginations. The newspapers the next day reflected this in their headlines: "Friendship Through Food." Equally responsive were the radio commentators. Already the tasting parties were developing a deeper significance. They were now practical demonstrations of different and divergent peoples meeting in friendship over a common problem.

It was soon plain that it would be impractical to have a separate party for each nationality. There would have to be doubling up. But how was this to be accomplished? The anthropologist's insight saved the day. Food knows no political boundaries, she said. The earth is divided into great regions in which all the inhabitants have certain similarities of habits. If cooking customs vary, at least the component basic foods are similar.

The Scandinavian peoples were a natural group and they were chosen to take over the second party. But the central Europeans had the committee worried. Newspaper headlines were screaming about the Polish border difficulties. There could not have been a less auspicious moment to ask the groups to work to-

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gether. Magnificently, the foreign-born women themselves mapped out their own solution. They would have an all-Slav party—Polish, Russian, Yugoslav, Czechoslovakian, etc. Since the majority of the American Jewish population also emanated from this region, it would be represented with this group. And around a single table these women had warm and friendly conferences making the plans for their co-operative tasting party.

Another interesting group was the western Mediterranean—including Italy, the South of France, Spain, and Portugal. The food demonstrations here revolved around the characteristic grains of the different areas bordering the Mediterranean. The last party of the current Spring series (being planned as the magazine goes to press) will be "American," showing the differences and derivations in American regional cooking from Creole to Irish, from American Indian and Negro to German and English.

The amount of interest shown in this food project, nationally as well as in New York City, is surprising. The parties have already influenced the thinking of the official City group responsible for disseminating to the press weekly market news based on available foods and suggesting menus for low cost and good nutrition. Some of the foreign recipes and new ways of using standard American foods (Shredded Wheat, for example, forms the foundation for a very delicious Greek dessert) have already found their way into official releases. But more important, New York City, with two-thirds of its population either foreign-born or first generation born in this country, will be thought of far more realistically in the future planning of this most influential organization.

The Board of Education is already conducting experiments in its high school homemaking classes in parts of the city

where there are concentrations of foreign-born populations; foreign-origin housewives are being invited into the schools to demonstrate their cooking secrets. One of the largest labor unions has signified its intention of organizing tasting parties in its plants. The New York Advertising Women's Club has voted to adopt "Friendship Through Food" for its immediate war project of the year. The federal agencies have also acknowledged the usefulness of the project in the development of their own programs. The OPA is supplying its ten regional directors with full background information and procedure instructions for instigating similar activities all over the country. The War Food Administration is using its National Bulletin for the same purpose.

And this is just the beginning. This is only one project, a simple project built around a fundamental human interest. It involves no fancy theories, it embraces no intellectual doctrines. Surely there are other human needs that can bring varied groups together in a similar friendly way, their children, perhaps, and the special aspects of adolescence in wartime, or—for the men—the task of earning a living. These are the real immediate concerns of everyday human beings. Perhaps instead of large-scale conferences to discuss interracial and intercultural relations, we need first and foremost the experience of working out common solutions in little groups and big groups, the experience of knowing first-hand our next door neighbors. After all, what's cooking in our neighbor's pot is likely to be just as delicious as what's cooking in our own!

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*Rosalie Slocum is a public relations counsel working with the Common Council and directing public relations for the Civilian Defense Volunteer Office of New York City. (To obtain material on this project, see note in Miscellany.)*

# EVERYONE WE CALL "DU"

HERBERT KUBLY

I HAVE never been in Switzerland, and my experience with the Swiss in America has been largely limited to two communities, so I am not an authority on Swiss Americans. Still I am going to risk a few observations.

I lived my first twenty years in New Glarus, Wisconsin, and in 1942 I visited briefly in Helvetia, West Virginia. The two communities are probably as dissimilar as it is possible for two American villages to be, yet in their spiritual foundations they are alike, and even their obvious differences grew out of the Swissness which they have in common.

One of my New Glarus neighbors has told me that "not only marriages are contracted in heaven, but Divine Providence also turns the knot that ties man to his habitation." I found the people of New Glarus and Helvetia essentially the same. Perhaps some of them are cousins, for a visit to the Helvetia graveyard revealed the names of Marty, Muller, Roth, Pauli, Engler, Karlen and Hofer—names also familiar in New Glarus. (The young journalist—not of Swiss descent—who made the trip into West Virginia with me helped in my graveyard research by covering one half the cemetery and writing down the names on the tombstones. On his list was the name Hier RuhtinFrieden—Here RestsinPeace. There are a great many Mr. Friedens buried in the Swiss Reformed Cemetery in New Glarus, too.)

In the 19th century bands of Swiss emigrated to the United States because of intense poverty which swept over the

homeland. In 1845, 118 men, women, and children came to America from Canton Glarus, in rugged northern Switzerland, to found New Glarus. In 1869, a smaller band of thirty Swiss met in Brooklyn, New York, and pushed into the Appalachian Mountains to settle Helvetia.

The Glarners settled in the hills of southern Wisconsin, hills which divide long fertile trough-like river valleys and combine some of the scenic beauty of the homeland with a richness of soil that the Swiss had never known. The Helvetians—perhaps they were greater romanticists—found a deep valley in the wildest mountains of West Virginia, where the peaks were as rocky as those in Switzerland, the forests as thick, and the soil as thin. What there was of the soil was to wash into the narrow valley when the forests were removed. The colonists of New Glarus all are dead, but an old lady who came as a child with the settlers 75 years ago still lived in Helvetia in 1942. "Though we were discouraged when we arrived," she said, "we had to stay. We could no longer get out of the valley."

The colonization of New Glarus was planned and sponsored by the mother canton, which sent two agents to buy 1,200 acres of land in a single tract. (Considerable of that land was purchased back by the State of Wisconsin from the Swiss American farmers in 1934 for the New Glarus Woods State Park.) The colonists arrived in Wisconsin after a 90-day sea and land journey during which a diarist wrote near Pittsburgh, "We saw finely

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dressed ladies milking cows and at first we thought it must be some holiday, but soon we were to learn that American ladies always wear their Sunday clothes."

After surviving a rigorous Wisconsin winter, the community began operation on a socialistic basis, with twenty-two families each assigned twenty acres of land, with the remainder to be held in common. That Common is now the site of the town of New Glarus. A year later, the village contained twenty cabins for twenty-nine families, and the total population was 129. Each family owned a cow, and 700 bushels of corn had been produced. By 1850 a school and church had been built and a postoffice established. The census that year revealed 311 people, who had turned to wheat raising to increase their prosperity. "In January, 1853," wrote Joshua Wild in his diary, "thirty-one citizens went to Monroe afoot to get their citizenship papers. Everyone was happy. The county clerk poured a bushel of apples on a sheet. All the men grabbed them because they had not had apples for years. The men took home the seeds and planted them, and when the trees grew up they were called citizenship trees."

By raising wheat the people in New Glarus grew in prosperity to the point of building a distillery, which was promptly changed into a brewery. They turned to dairying, at which they were so expert, only after a series of calamities had made wheat growing unprofitable. The price of wheat fell after the Civil War, the hill-sides were badly eroded, and, as a final calamity, the cinch bug came into the state and pressed his sharp beak into the tender green wheat, destroying the crop. The farmers turned to grazing, and out of the adversities grew a prosperity that is still growing in New Glarus, which is now the heart of the largest cheese producing area in the United States. In addition to

many cheese factories, the Pet Milk Company has established a plant in the town, and the community thrives by trade and commerce. In 1940, census takers found it the most prosperous rural community in Wisconsin. The people of New Glarus drive more automobiles, listen to more radios, and drink their beer chilled by more refrigerators than the people in any other part of the midwestern state.

Now, how were the Helvetians in West Virginia faring? They had taken the lumber off their hills, which provided a brief flux of prosperity, but then discovered that the sterile soil was easily eroded. The new home was more like Switzerland than ever, and they drew on their heritage of careful work and husbandry which had made the Swiss endure in the homeland.

When we descended into the tiny valley in August of 1942 after a hazardous trip on a narrow mountain road, we drove up to a large square house with a courtyard in the center, built much like the feudal manor houses of ancient Switzerland. On the front door was painted a sign—*Helvetia Inn*. Behind the Inn, in a hillside orchard, two women were harvesting the hay that grew under the trees. They raked it with small hand rakes and carried it to the barn in bundles on their backs. One of the women was a Negro—the first Negro Swiss I've ever seen. When we introduced ourselves, we learned that the white woman was Hulda Huber, whose widowed mother, the pioneer I have previously referred to, owned the Inn and small farm; and the colored woman was Dora Marley, who was brought into *Helvetia* as a small child by Mr. Huber more than fifty years ago and had lived as one of the family ever since. Miss Huber and Miss Marley did all the work about the Inn and farm.

"*Sprichst du auch deutsch?*" I asked Dora Marley, and she answered quite truthfully, "*Besser als du.*"

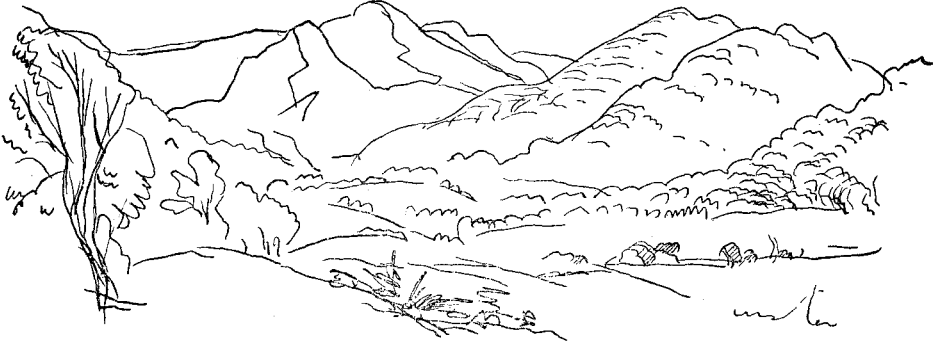
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Late in the afternoon we climbed the mountain to a table-land pasture with a thirteen-year-old boy, to get his father's five cows, which he distinguished from the other cows in the communal pasture by the sound of their bells. To my journalist friend, who is of a musical nature, the bells were B-flat and C, but to the lad who was our guide, they were the red heifer and Old Toby.

Every farmer combined the evening and

This direct contrast to the exodus of young people from New Glarus I suspect is because the world has come to New Glarus in the form of films, radio, and auto travel, to lure the young people away, while in Helvetia, the world has forgotten the little village and it has forged few links with the outside and has remained at peace with itself.

We ate extremely abundant meals in the Helvetia Inn. A dinner, if I remember



morning milk, and each forenoon his wife used it to make cheese and butter under the most primitive methods in her kitchen. One of the women we visited had canned 100 quarts of berries, peaches, sweet corn, pickles, tomatoes, and green beans in three days, in addition to making considerable sauerkraut and drying corn and apples.

That evening we lay beside the stream, watching a red harvest moon climb over the crest of the mountains, while the girls of the community and the boys too young for military service sang songs to an accordion and guitar accompaniment. I asked the boys, none of whom seemed to have much money nor any desire to spend it, if they dreamed of leaving the valley.

"We like it fine here and don't guess we're going to move away," one said. "Sometimes there isn't much doing, but we don't think we'd like it much in cities."

correctly, consisted of fried chicken, mashed potatoes, green beans, salad, corn on the cob, sauce, and a hot peach pie. At each meal we played a little game, trying to discover something that had not been produced by Hulda Huber and Dora Marley on the little farm. We found one product—the orange juice we were served at breakfast. This complete self-sufficiency was not a Bohemian fetish in Helvetia. The almost complete absence of buying and selling was an economic adjustment. As we drove away from the valley two days later, we remembered the Longfellow lines: "There the richest was poor and the poorest lived in abundance. . . ."

The most conspicuous possessions that the Swiss brought to the United States and the ones which drove them almost a century ago to the unknown forests of Wisconsin and the wilderness of West

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Virginia are their love for freedom and their vehement sense of justice. Nothing can turn a peaceful Schweizer into a blazing fury as an injustice done a man, and the only thing that makes him angrier than an injustice done himself is an injustice done someone else. This I know is true, for I am the son of a man who has been indignant for sixty years.

There is a little yodel song I like to think about—the Emmental Yodel—which goes like this:

*"Do gihts nut fu complimentanta,  
Allus seit ma numme du  
Siegs der milch bub mit der brante,  
Oder trag er ratz herr shu."*

Which, roughly translated, says: "Here (in Emmental) we know nothing of paying compliments or drawing comparisons between folks. Everyone we call 'du,' be it the milk boy with his pail or the gentleman wearing judge's shoes."

When I was a student at the University of Wisconsin I studied German, at which I was quite apt because of my knowledge of German-Swiss. But there were several peculiar traps of the language into which I fell easily. For instance, I always addressed the matronly German lady who was my professor as "du," instead of "Sie," and no matter how strongly she insisted that I call her "Sie," the next time I called her "du," as, I might add, I addressed every one else. Finally, one day, she said to me in desperation, "*Wenn Sie immer 'du' sagen, dann müssen Sie meine Schwester heiraten* (If you're going to say 'du' all the time, you'll have to marry my sister)," explaining that "du" was a pronoun reserved for the kind of family intimacy which I presume would include in-laws.

Now I had met the sister, so I made an especially valiant endeavor to remember to say "Sie" instead of "du."

Just a few weeks ago a young Swiss, an artist, was a visitor in New York and ear-

nestly set about seeing the town. On a Sunday he selected one of the most famous churches in the city in which to worship and, arriving there, was rather appalled to discover that a uniformed sexton at an iron gate was permitting to enter the House of God only those people who held pink tickets. Two policemen were also at the gate to assist in this division of the sheep from the goats.

The young Swiss saw a small and shabby woman, begging the sexton to permit her to enter to worship. Her hand trembled and her face was troubled. The injustice shocked the young Swiss artist into action.

He attempted to walk through the gates and was stopped because he showed no pink ticket. "Is this a Christian church?" he asked, and when he was told it was, he said, "But I'm a Christian." Shaking with rage, he spoke to the men at the gate: "*Everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*"

The disturbance brought a frocked clergyman from inside the church. He heard the words of Jesus and told the sexton to let the young man enter. The artist took the old woman by the arm. "My mother wishes to worship, too," he said, and the crowd on the steps divided to let them pass into the church.

Perhaps the young man acted as he did because he is one of a great company of youth in the world today who believe in justice and are fighting for it. But I can't help believing too that it was to some degree because he came from the land where they say "du" instead of "Sie" or "Heil!"

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Another piece by Herbert Kubly appeared in the Summer 1943 issue of this magazine, "An American Discovers America," the scene of which was also New Glarus.

## AMERICA SPEAKING

### HONOR ROLL

#### JAPANESE AMERICANS SPEAKING:

"Those 'beloved Bums,' the Brooklyn Dodgers, took a healthy swat at racial discrimination recently by inviting relocation center baseball players to try out for berths in their widespread baseball organization. 'The fact that these boys are American boys is good enough for the Brooklyn club. Whether they are of Japanese, English, or Polish ancestry makes no difference,' Branch Rickey Jr. wrote a WRA camp athletic director.

"It must not be forgotten, however, that organized baseball is guilty of a fault which is, in fact, a national disgrace. This is its color line against the Negro one-tenth of our population. Baseball's Jim Crow policy is every bit as firm and determined as the segregation laws of the deepest South. Although the major leagues are crying this year for want of manpower, some of the ablest players in America, stars like Josh Gibson or Satchel Paige, are forced to perform outside the pale of organized baseball. Discrimination based on race is something which affects us all, whether or not we are directly touched by it. And discrimination on the baseball diamond is every bit as ugly as racial bans in a restaurant or on a street car."—*Editorial in the Pacific Citizen, organ of the Japanese American Citizens League, August 21, 1943.*

#### CHINESE AMERICANS SPEAKING:

"Whereas the war with Japan has promulgated well organized propaganda of racial

hatred and discrimination affecting loyal American citizens of Japanese ancestry, and whereas such propaganda as 'No Japs in California' which is gaining prevalence in the State is against all principles of fair play and harmful to a true democracy; therefore, be it resolved that we, the Chinese youth of the Lake Tahoe [California] Christian Conference, in consonance with the sentiment of Mme. Chiang Kai-shek, as expressed in her speech 'No hatred toward the Japanese people,' condemn such activities to be un-American, undemocratic, and un-Christian."—*Reported in Christianity and Crisis, September 20, 1943.*

#### NEGRO AMERICANS SPEAKING:

"Anything which limits the human status of any human limits the human status of all. History—past, current, and projected—offers hundreds of cases in point. Day after day we are forced to face the insidious spread of some abuse against large numbers of people—an abuse whose precedent was first established against some 'minority' which had been 'proved' to be either inferior or dangerous.

"It is that truth which drives me to a constant repetition of calls for you to join in the struggle toward human status. There is no Negro, no Jew, no Mexican, no Jesus-follower (somehow we must distinguish between them and the embracers of vague and easily adjusted Christian creeds), no sincere believer in the worth of humanity who can ignore the feverish

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spread of hatred and doubt by a variety of interest against certain people.

"Although it is a widely publicized Nazi practice, persecution of Jews because they are Jews is rapidly gaining ground here. With a great deal of pain I point out that Negroes are guilty of helping in the spread of stupid and groundless rumors with reference to the Jewish people. . . .

"It is heartening to see that a few newspapers and a growing number of individuals are speaking up in defense of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights now being so rashly jeopardized in the matter of the Japanese and Americans of Japanese ancestry in this country, especially those who were evacuated from the west coast under pressure from non-military sources and in the face of legislative reports and judicial opinions to the contrary. . . .

"It is easy enough to swallow sensational lies pandered by people who love nothing but power and profits. What is required of us is to try to see truth in the midst of fallacy. Especially should the so-called minorities seek truth and act vigorously in defense of right. . . . If you help to let down the Constitutional bars, just remember you will be the next one to be carried over."—*Erna P. Harris, columnist for the Los Angeles Tribune, Negro weekly, December 27, 1943.*

### A RABBI TO HIS CONGREGATION:

"Try this psychological trick on yourself. Whenever I cite an instance of Negro abuse, substitute the word Jew for Negro. Notice how your blood pressure rises. That is exactly the way Negroes react to abuse of Negroes. As Americans we should react with the same indignation over Negro as over Jewish injustice.

"To avert racial clashes now, and avoid them in the postwar period, we must

strengthen the movements promoting interracial amity. We must help to secure full enfranchisement for the Negro and co-operate with him in the effort to break down all unfair economic barriers. . . .

"The conscience of America must be aroused. The United States must do some domestic house cleaning before we dare face the world and say, 'This is not a white man's war, this is a war for all humanity.'—*Rabbi J. X. Cohen in the Congress Weekly, December 17, 1943.*

### THE SOUTH SPEAKING:

"The Russian nation has for a generation shown what can be done to outlaw race prejudice in a country with many kinds of people. They did not wait for people's minds to change. They made racial discrimination and persecution illegal. As czarist Russia sowed repression, it reaped revolution. By the same law, the Soviet Union is harvesting in united effort what it planted in the equal treatment of all its people. Ponder, please, these observations in a brief new study of what anthropology contributes to human understanding. 'They welcomed and honored the different dress, different customs, different arts of the many tribes and countries that live as part of their nation. The more backward groups were given special aid to help them catch up with the more advanced. Each people was helped to develop its own cultural forms, its own written language, theater, music, dance, and so on.

"At the same time that each people was encouraged in its national self-development, the greatest possible interchange of customs was fostered, so that each group became more distinctively itself and at the same time more a part of the whole.

"The Russians have welcomed cultural differences and they have refused to treat them as inferiorities. No part of the

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Russian program has had greater success than their racial program.'

"How about applying that to America?"—*Editorial in the Richmond [Virginia] News Leader*. Editor, Dr. Douglas Southall Freeman, writer, historian, and biographer of General Robert E. Lee.

### YWCA SPEAKING:

A letter to the President: "Many of us at the National Board of the YWCA . . . should like . . . to urge upon you that you use the power and prestige of your high office, as President of the United States and Commander-in-Chief of its armed forces, to abolish racial segregation in the armed services of the nation. With you, we believe that racial strife destroys national unity at home and renders us suspect abroad. We further believe that until the federal government ceases practices of separation, the efforts of other groups are muted. We have had evidence of this, and should like to cite just one example: When a YWCA group protested seating practices which segregated Negro patrons in an Illinois theatre, such segregation being in violation of the Civil Rights statutes of that state, the telling, crushing answer received was that as long as the United States Navy could 'get away with it' at the nearby Great Lakes Naval Station, there was no cause for the theatre management to be too greatly alarmed.

"In addition to this, involuntary separation, which always carries with it for the group set apart against its own volition a stigma difficult to bear under any circumstances, becomes a veritable badge of second-class citizenship when it stems from the federal government. We believe that this must cease, not only because, as you have so truly said, the integrity of our nation and our war aims is at stake in our attitude toward minority groups at home,

but also because if we wish to vindicate the principles of freedom and equality and democracy upon which this nation was based, we must solve the problem of race in the United States.

"There is nothing in social evolution, we believe, to prove that separation solves such problems, but much evidence that unity does. Our own experience, in attempting to build a fellowship uniting all women and girls, of whatever race, creed, or nationality who are committed to our purposes, has given us practical demonstration of this within the YWCA. On the other hand, the evidence seems to point to the conclusion that many instances of recent clashes between white and Negro service men and civilians have deep roots in the continuation of the undemocratic practice of separation of service people on account of race. . . ."—*Mrs. Henry A. Ingraham, President of the National Board of the YWCA.*

### SOLDIERS SPEAKING:

"Yank takes its views on the post-war 'race problem' from the founders of the United States, who believed that all men are created equal. No man should talk about 'giving' any American that which he already has by inalienable right. On August 31, 1943, there were 74,013 Negroes serving in the Navy and 582,861 in the Army, of whom 153,900 were overseas. There is a Negro General in the U.S. Army. The Navy recently named an airfield after a Negro who gave his life for the service. Yank believes it folly to propose that Negroes be governed by whites [a reference to a letter to the editor proposing that Negroes not be given equality but rewarded for their fighting with "some portion of some country for their own use, where they will be governed by white people"] when Negroes in the Army and Navy are fighting for our coun-

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try's rights, when Negroes in our state and national legislatures are helping make our country's laws and when there are Negroes in our courts interpreting our laws." *Yank*, December 17, 1943.

### THE THEATER SPEAKING:

"Race equality is practically an unwritten law of the theater. Negroes have always shared equally the work of the theater—and its fame. In my memory there never has been a question about it. Paul Robeson, Ethel Waters, Canada Lee—I could name hundreds of Negroes whose place in the theater has never been questioned. We of the theater, regardless of race or color, work together in the same casts without so much as thinking about it. Race differences have stopped being a problem with us. I am proud of that fact. I am proud of the theater because it is true.

"And if it is true of the theater, why should it not be true of other professions and other industries? There is no reason why not. Race equality can become a reality, if only it can be tried completely without prejudice, with mutual respect on both sides. In the new world that is to arise from this war it must be tried—and it will succeed. The theater, one of the great common denominators of our democracy, is living proof that it will."—*Helen Hayes*, writing in *Brief House Organ Items*, a publication of the Writers' War Board.

### THE PRESIDENT SPEAKING:

"The unity of the nations fighting for a free world include men of every color and race. The strength which this nation contributes to that unity depends at home on men of all races who are also all Americans.

"Unfortunately, in this time when America requires greatness in its spirit,

some of our citizens have betrayed our cause and damaged the world's respect for our faith by acts of violence and prejudice, bigotry and division. Such men miss the meaning of America as they are incapable of understanding the brotherhood of men in terms of divine teaching and democratic living. Some such men deserve our censure. Some are entitled to our contempt. All require the never-ceasing reiteration of the Christian faith and American faith in the dignity of all peoples and right of all men to equal treatment in this land and on the earth."—*President Roosevelt in his Race Relations Day message*, February, 1944.

### STATE EXECUTIVE SPEAKING:

"It has been suggested that the Constitution be amended or laws enacted so that American citizens of Japanese ancestry may be removed from this country or denied privileges which our Constitution guarantees to all Americans. I hope that the time never comes when the liberty of any American citizen is limited or restricted merely because his skin is dark, or his eyes appear slanted, or because he belongs to a minority religious or racial group. If the time comes when this should be done, I would ask: What did we fight for?"—*Governor Herbert B. Maw of Utah*, speaking in *Ogden*, Utah, November 1943.

### THE CHURCHES SPEAKING:

"Anti-Semitism, ill-treatment of Negroes and Japanese Americans, Oriental Exclusion Acts, race riots in widely separated places—with growing resentment by dark-skinned peoples against white domination and their feeling that they are deprived of the position properly belonging to free men in a democratic society—make it mandatory for Christians

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to speak with prophetic voice and act with apostolic conviction. We must and can achieve redeeming attitudes, methods of common understanding, ways of friendly living and convictions of spiritual unity.

"As Christians we must pursue this vision with realism, sacrifice, and valor. We must demonstrate in life the peace and goodwill among all classes and races which we so ardently profess."—*Race Relations Message from the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.*

you wipe out the misunderstandings which are fertile soil for race hatred. Unite Negro and white schools, churches and other institutions so that together you may help solve the economic, social and political problems which beset all people everywhere. Only in that way can we build a world of brotherhood, with peace, liberty and justice for all."—*Statement on the Race Relations Crisis*, issued by Oswald Garrison Villard and signed by 317 leading Americans of varying races, nationalities, and occupations.

### PROMINENT AMERICANS SPEAKING:

"... Negro Americans are outraged by segregation in our armed forces, where the gulf between professed war aims and their application to hundreds of thousands of Negro soldiers is so great as to make a mockery of the Four Freedoms. This policy of segregation proves an insurmountable barrier to true happiness or even human decency. It torments the Negro people daily like a dagger whose point is always in the flesh. At the same time, by setting white against black in the competition for jobs, a fatal handicap is raised to every effort to achieve adequate economic standards and a genuinely democratic existence for the masses in the majority group.

"If they are to stop fearing and hating each other, Negroes and whites must know each other. But how can they know each other so long as segregation fosters ignorance and fear in the people of both races? Therefore we call to all America:

"Open wide the doors of all churches, all schools, all unions, all fraternal bodies and all businesses to people of every race and color. Only by working, playing and worshipping together, day by day, can

### THE POET SPEAKING:

#### ULTIMATUM FOR MAN

"Now the frontiers are all closed.

There is no other country we can run  
away to;

There is no ocean we can cross over.

At last we must turn and live with one  
another.

"We cannot escape this any longer.

We cannot continue to choose between  
good and evil,

The good for ourselves, the evil for our  
neighbor.

We must all bear the equal burden.

"Now we must learn love . . .

Love is no longer a theme for eloquence,  
Or a way of life for a few whose hearts  
can decide it.

It is the sternest necessity; the unequivocal ultimatum.

There is no way out. There is no country  
we can flee to;

There is no man on earth who must not  
face this task now."

—Peggy Pond Church in the Survey Graphic.

## LETTER TO THE READER

M. MARGARET ANDERSON

It is difficult sometimes, working in the little editorial office at 222 Fourth Avenue in New York City to visualize you scattered across the continent and beyond. Sometimes you write us—more frequently of late—and we feel the warmth of living contact. At other times, too, you become very real, when we are sending out the magazine, for instance, and I help stuff envelopes. Every town with five or more copies gets its batch tied up separately, according to postoffice regulations, and geography comes alive. Here is California, filling up bag after bag—Los Angeles and San Francisco asking for bags by themselves. (This is small stuff for the big sheets like *Time*, which can set up their own printing outfits on the West Coast for simultaneous publication with Chicago and the East.) As for us, here is Des Moines, this package. What are these readers like? What would they be doing and thinking if we dropped in on them? How do they use CG? Are we doing for them anything like the job we should be doing? Here is Webster Groves, an astonishingly big pile for Missouri. Mississippi grows. Detroit has mushroomed; everyone who didn't already subscribe made a perfect target for a CG Christmas gift. Washington absorbs more and more copies. It is a yeasty and encouraging business to watch the piles and numbers grow from issue to issue, to meditate on the new readers who are coming to know us, though we do not yet know them.

But to return to your letters. There have been more, of late. The majority

have been eager and enthusiastic and have said more good things about the magazine than it could possibly deserve. But there is a worried undercurrent to some, the last month or two. Writes California: "Deeply as I am interested in seeing the Negroes among us well served, I regret to see *COMMON GROUND* becoming predominantly devoted to discussion of Negro needs. They form the largest of the minorities, and their needs are urgent, I know; yet I should like to see a balance kept between the European groups and the Negroes. Many other sources of information are available about Negroes, very few about the European groups." A New York City writer is troubled similarly over the number of pieces in the Winter issue on the Negro. "Why?" she asks. "Nobody with any intelligence does not recognize what a very serious problem is theirs, and that it must be met. And, as I figure it, we are all willing to meet and help it, once we *understand what we can do about it*. [My italics.] The earlier numbers of CG very frequently showed its readers a problem and how it should be met, through most fascinating little stories. Cannot this be done about the Negro? . . . In this Winter number, 'So We Bought a Farm' is delightful and makes its point, as also does 'Sophia Becomes an American.'" A New Jersey reader is discouraged with our approach. "I have come increasingly to feel," she writes, "that it is unfair to always state one side, that the name might as well be Common Grouch, that the impression of each number is that

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there is little good in the country, nothing, in fact, but a dream which has never been fulfilled. . . . Is there any one of your staff that might contribute an article showing genuine love for and pride in this country? If you are talking about common ground, I should think a little would belong to the majority. . . . If we have done so little to fulfill any promise, we'd better fold up and let anybody else try to do a better job." She goes on to discuss our stand on the "Negro question."

These letters of outright dissent have been accompanied by an unusual flow of mail about Langston Hughes' "White Folks Do the Funniest Things," which has provoked more comment than any piece we have ever published. Requests for reprint permissions came in by telegram and letter within a day or two of publication, and from a great variety of sources: from general magazines like the *Modern Digest* of Canada, from religious publications like *The Messenger* of St. Louis, from the growing young Negro *Digest* of Chicago. Newspapers picked it up; interracial groups wrote to ask permission to make mimeographed copies for local study. CG readers were divided. Either they were very enthusiastic and told us they had buttonholed everyone within reach to read the piece to them, that it had "hit the bull's eye," or they were disturbed. From North Carolina came a prompt protest: "I have the Winter number of your publication and do not believe that its circulation in this region would serve the purpose for which it was intended. I refer particularly to the articles by Langston Hughes and Margaret Halsey. Hughes is purposely offensive and his counsel of truculence could be followed only to the disadvantage of all concerned, and especially of the negroes [sic] who attempted the experiment. One smart-aleck negro can do more harm to the negro cause in a community than an

entire company of night riders." New Jersey wrote with some heat: "Now Langston Hughes would probably not admit that he had received anything in this country nor compare his lot with that which would have been his if his forebears had stayed in Africa, and we, of course, must not remind him of it. He, and many others like him, want all the privileges for the whole mass without his achievement." In an entirely different vein came a note from Lillian Smith in Georgia. She had found the piece "delightful." *South Today* was proposing it as a kind of test of racial attitudes and thinking: if people could "take it," they were sound; if they could not, something was very wrong with them and their thinking needed overhauling.

This mixed reaction has interested us enormously. We are perpetually being accused, of course, of reaching only the persons who are already convinced our way. (Though there is nothing essentially wrong with that, as we see it; people are always in need of ammunition to use on others.) But one fact stands out clearly here. Even with readers who go the whole way with us on the foreign-language groups, there is apparently very real emotional or intellectual withdrawal when we touch too frankly and too vigorously upon matters of color. This is important. For if the American idea is ever to realize its potentialities in full and rich use of its human resources, much of the responsibility for leadership in national thinking and in setting national patterns will fall upon the kind of people I like to think our CG readers are. It seems to me they will have to stretch to meet the challenge of a new day. For the issue is real; it is nothing CG has trumped up. World forces have thrown the problem of color into high focus over all the planet; we are simply trying to keep the magazine abreast of the real world. Not for a moment have

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we deserted our interest in the European groups. The bulk of any issue is still devoted to them. It is not a question of either-or; it is a question of emphasis. The problems of the foreign-born in assimilation in the American scene, while still very concrete, have not appreciably worsened in this moment of world crisis. But the racial tensions mount; they lie like dynamite ready to explode into a series of disastrous Detroites. We would be less than honest to ignore their seriousness; we would be kidding ourselves into a mere illusion of doing our job. To ignore the paradox of our world crusade for freedom while we deny the freedoms on a basis of color here at home would be unforgivable ivory-tower escapism, a dodging of the responsibilities that inhere in CG's being the kind of magazine it is—dedicated simply and sincerely to the right of every human being to full self-development, whatever his race, creed, national background, or color.

For great forces have set the world afire. *Freedom*, which we use so lightly on our tongues, is a blazing word, as Americans perhaps best of all the world should know. The flame it kindles is not lightly to be put out. It burns in men's souls whether they are white or colored. And one-tenth of our fellow Americans are colored; two-thirds of the people of the world, with whom we propose to live creatively when the war is done, are colored. In them, too, we have set the fires of freedom burning. They would like to believe our fine high words. But they test us, over and over again, by our treatment of our fellows who happen to be colored, and what they see is not encouraging. It does no good to duck the issue, to argue that Negroes may have more chance at development here than as if their forebears had stayed in Africa, to be naive about the second-class citizenship we accord them, to lull ourselves into

believing that is all they want. No American ever was content with anything second class. Japan and the Axis propaganda machine are not so naive. In the Far East, in the islands of the Pacific, in South America, wherever there are people of color, they are exploiting to the hilt the discrepancy between our democratic professions and our practice. The freedom we talk about so glibly, they say, is freedom for whites only. They point to our throwing 40,000 Japanese nationals and 70,000 Japanese American citizens into what are euphemistically known as relocation centers but are little more than concentration camps, though we do not treat our white German and Italian enemy aliens and their American-born sons and daughters in any comparable fashion. We allow our Railway Brotherhoods and our railroads to ban Negro firemen even in a manpower crisis, they point out; we have walk-out strikes on the part of whites when they have to use the same toilet facilities as Negroes; we employ discriminatory "Mexican" wage scales; we threaten to disfranchise all soldiers, black and white, so that "white supremacy" may be maintained in the South; we have our Beaumonts and Detroites. What hope can the world have in our protestations of freedom for people "everywhere in the world," they ask, when we will not even put out our hand at home?

It is that hand at home, and the CG reader who can extend it, that I am really writing you about. Not only is it of great importance in the world struggle; it is of supreme importance to our internal strength as a nation and our own personal spiritual integrity. It lies within our own small individual power to put forward. While CG is rigorously exploring the possibilities of a national attack on these problems through an overall Institute of Ethnic Democracy, we have no easy il-

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lusion that, once such an Institute is established, racial tensions in the country will vanish overnight. Much will still depend upon the individual. Much more depends upon him now, when his goodwill finds no collective community outlet. Too many of us are inclined to shrug the problem off, I think; to take refuge in the escapist and defeatist dodge that the thing is too big for us as individuals to tackle, that we will have to wait till someone shows us the magic road.

Actually there are many places where we can take hold, no matter how uncourageous and insignificant we may be. For the magic road, I am convinced, lies ultimately in our own hearts, in our own creative imaginations, in our reaching out across the barriers of color to what are only other human beings like ourselves, now torn by fears and despair and bitterness and aspiration and yearning.

It may be well to start from the clear realization that we had nothing to do with being born white or colored. As Yasuo Kuniyoshi says elsewhere in this issue, babies are born all over the world, and he happened to be born in Japan. Some of us had the great cosmic luck to be born white, in America. We had nothing to do with it; we can take not the slightest credit. When we say defensively that Langston Hughes wants "all the privileges for the whole mass without his achievement," I suggest it is time to wonder just how much we as whites had to "achieve" to have the right to walk the sidewalk without getting off for a person of the opposite color, to go into any store and buy what we can afford, to go to an unrestricted public school, to go into any restaurant and order food we are prepared to pay for, to go to any church in our community, to buy or rent housing facilities wherever we can pay, to vote, to belong to an unsegregated union, to ride in any seat in any bus or train or

trolley, to be called Mr. or Miss, to go to any vacation spot we choose and can swing financially. No one has ever made me "achieve" anything to have these privileges; they have come to me as a white American, without desert. I am grateful for them. But I cannot take them for granted simply because I am white, nor can I feel happy about them when they are denied others because they happen to be non-white or of a different religion. I cannot understand our arrogance—to set ourselves up as judges, to say that because we happen to have been lucky enough to be born white we can deny or mete out in grudging gradualism to those who by a similar accident of birth happen to be colored, what has come to us totally without achievement. (I am not now referring to those competitive fields of endeavor where achievement justly enters in.) Who are we, so to judge? By what right have we appointed ourselves? What justice would we find in a reversal of the situation?

For this is the next step—putting ourselves in the other fellow's place across the color line and meditating how we would react were our situations reversed. How would we feel as the wife of a university professor, to shop in the grocery handiest to our Washington home and watch them give us the bad oranges to discourage our trade, to see them slice our cheese so thin the pieces would not hold and then crumble the package to be sure the slices were unusable, to hold our tongue because the American right of protest without suffering violence is a luxury for whites only? How would we feel even in the North to hesitate outside every barber shop or hotel or restaurant wondering the old question? How would we feel in our country's uniform to be segregated in training, to be made to get off the sidewalks for a white civilian, to be refused the salute due the uniform, to be Jim

## LETTER TO THE READER

Crowded on buses and trains and PX's by fellow citizens whom we were prepared to give our lives to defend? To be told we should be "above" feeling insulted, though no one ever tells the whites they should be above giving insults? To wear our race always as a weight around our thinking and our hearts—never to be free for an instant to relax, for fear the whole race, not we alone, will be blamed for any momentary slip we make—never to be judged as plain Arthur Smith, but always as a Negro? To have the Mr. on our local tax statement carefully inked out? To have white people patronize us as somebody they can "do something for," never meet us on a simple equal human level interested in like things, even if by training and profession and manners we are infinitely their superior? To give our sons to die for liberty abroad, yet watch a younger son over whom we yearn grow up into the old denials? Always to be told to have patience, that it will all work out, to be given the palliative: "I think it probable a time will arrive when the negro will be absorbed, say five hundred or so years"?

This is an adventure for the creative imagination and has considerable therapeutic value. It can be given added meaning if we take the next step and actually get to know as human beings some Negroes of our own approximate standing and interests. Those of us with Negro friends find ourselves continually translating outward events into terms of what these things must do to them; our own horizons and capacities and understanding are widened and enriched. But how can we make such friends, you ask? The segregated patterns of American life get in the way of ordinary contact in almost every section of the country; in some sections only the toughest and most sanely tenacious courage can cross the barriers.

I have a way to suggest; it may work

in some localities, not at all in others. But here you are, scattered across the continent, many in the same towns and cities. What if you got together as CG readers? (In New York City, our American Common has brought subscribers together in a warm and friendly fashion.) The chances are that in a town of any size you would find your group made up of old-stock and new, Jew and Gentile, Negro, Oriental, and Caucasian. You might differ widely in economic and professional status, but you would all be readers and all concerned about human America; that is probably enough of an initial bond. Many of you will know each other anyway; like interests have a way of throwing persons on the same side of the color line together. Others you may never have encountered. Some will be richly worth knowing; we have a hunch the great majority are a fine sort. If any of you want to take the initiative and get a group like this together, we will gladly work with you and send you the names and addresses of fellow subscribers in your town.

What would you do? Primarily get to know one another as human beings, I think, by whatever means seems best suited to your local conditions: perhaps by mere casual get-togethers; perhaps by working together on some local project; perhaps by informal discussions of how you all got the way you are: if you are of second-generation stock, for instance, what strains on personality were involved in straddling two cultures; if you are a Negro, how you went about coming to terms with yourself for creative work instead of yielding to bitterness; if you are of old stock, what you find in the bewildering ethnic variety of America to give you hope or uneasiness.

I hesitate to suggest a permanent organization. I realize all too well your town may already be over "organized."

## COMMON GROUND

You may find it much better to work with groups already functioning. If, however, you should want to stick together as a formal or informal group, we would want to keep in close touch with you. You could be of great help to us, not only in pushing the ideas of COMMON GROUND and the Common Council on the local level, but in keeping us posted on local situations, on tensions and your successes in meeting them, in techniques for better community living that we in turn might pass on to other towns. For, despite the reaction of one of our readers quoted earlier, our very "problem" pieces stem from a profound faith in and love for America, from the conviction that once the problems of human relationships are understood by the ordinary man, they can be dealt with by vision and humility and intelligence in the communities throughout the country. The simple reaching out a hand to our fellows is not to be minimized even when measured against world cataclysm. For it is the sense of aloneness, of utter and final segregation, of loss of hope in the American way, that will drive people to ultimate despair and set off the explosion of racial dynamite.

If we are honest and simple and human, we will find out many things about each other that will surprise us, warm our

hearts, perhaps trouble us and impel us to action. We may be awkward and self-conscious with each other at first, for most of our so-called manners have been developed to keep people politely apart, not to bring us genuinely together. One thing I know: all of us who are involved in such a group cannot approach it in any "holier than thou" fashion, in a spirit of condescension, and have anything of true and lasting worth grow from it. And condescension creeps in so easily; we are so geared to it in white living we do not even recognize it. We will have to keep checking on ourselves, to put ourselves in the other person's place, as I suggested earlier, to see how we would react if the situation were reversed. Some of us may go to the other extreme and carry with us a hyper-sensitivity, a suspicious defensiveness that will get equally in the way of true and genuine exchange; we will have to keep checking on ourselves for this, too. But no matter how inept or fumbling our techniques of reaching out to one another, if the simple human will is there, we can lay the basis for rich and enduring relationships.

The stakes for the country and the world are high. Paradoxically, the returns to self are also high, as your editor knows.

Keep writing us!

## • Miscellany •

A NEW COURSE of interest to CG readers was offered for the first time at Antioch College last fall—a Seminar in Inter-Ethnic Fellowship. The immediate aim of the course was to provide a nucleus for an Inter-Ethnic Institute of the future, to which will come, by scholarship, representatives from all types of culture groups in this country and elsewhere.

Within such an Institute these heterogeneous groups would live, study, and work together with an eye to resolving their differences in co-operative and creative living. Such a workshop would provide the background from which these representatives would return to their own communities to teach by example the ways of co-operation.

## MISCELLANY

THE TEDDY MATSUMOTO EDITORIAL, quoted in the Common Council's Christmas folder—to which there has been very warm response—was written by Margaret Donaldson, news editor of The Daily Times, Mamaroneck, New York, and appeared in the June 18, 1943 number.

BROTHERHOOD WEEK was again sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews the week of Washington's Birthday. Of the several hundred permanent Round Tables of the National Conference in population centers across the country, many started as Brotherhood Week committees. These Round Tables bring together the leaders of the three faiths in their own communities to promote respect for human personality and treatment of others on the basis of worth. Materials are available from the National Council at 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City, 16.

RECENT PAMPHLETS of interest to CG readers include "The Harlem Riot, A Study in Mass Frustration," by Harold Orlansky, published by Social Analysis, G.P.O. Box 399, New York City 1, 25 cents. This is a carefully documented analysis of the underlying factors of the riot, many of which were ignored or barely hinted at in newspaper interpretation. A pamphlet by Earl Brown, "Why Race Riots?" published by the Public Affairs Committee, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City 20 (10 cents), outlines a social and economic plan for relieving racial tensions. "Our Constitutional Freedoms" by Robert E. Cushman, published also by the Public Affairs Committee in co-operation with the National Foundation for Education in American Citizenship (10 cents), introduces a series of popular studies of basic American concepts for use in schools and study groups in citizenship education. The pamphlet

discusses the origin of civil liberties, their meaning today, the means provided for safeguarding them, and the share of the citizen in protecting and strengthening them.

ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING action programs carried on in the field of better race relations is the Work Camp project of the American Friends Service Committee. Work Camps on the college-student level offer opportunities for service in fields of social and economic maladjustment where problems are being intensified as a result of the war. The 1944 Camps will work in areas of racial tension, migrant populations, and deteriorating natural resources. Junior Work Camps for high school students are also planned in the South, Middle West, and New England. For literature and application blanks address The Work Camp Committee, American Friends Service Committee, 20 South 12th Street, Philadelphia 7, Pennsylvania.

FROM PROLETAREC, Yugoslav weekly of Chicago, comes the following item:

"There's a textile mill in Pennsylvania with an employee roll that's a perfect example of our melting pot democracy.

"Sorting is done by an American.

"Carding is done by an Italian.

"Spinning is done by a Swede.

"Drawing is done by a Scot.

"Weaving is done by a Belgian.

"Inspection is done by a Frenchman.

"Scouring is done by an Albanian.

"Dyeing is done by a Turk.

"Pressing is done by a Pole.

"Supervision is done by an Irishman.

"And what do they make?—American flags."

CG READERS frequently write in to request information about interracial or-

## COMMON GROUND

ganizations working in the field of Negro-white relationships.

One of the oldest is the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, established in 1909. The civil rights representative of the Negroes of America, the NAACP now has 546 branches and 123 youth councils and college chapters in 41 states and the District of Columbia, with a membership of a quarter of a million. By a steady uncompromising fight over the years, by court battles, by education and contact, by lobbying and legislation, the NAACP has fought the "color line" on many fronts. Its activity is directed at wiping out segregation in the armed forces, at securing upgrading and employment at skilled-worker levels, at bettering recreational and housing facilities, at abolishing the poll tax and the "white primary," at abolishing race discrimination in teachers' salaries, etc.

Minimum membership is \$1; annual membership with *The Crisis Magazine* is \$2.50. National NAACP offices are at 69 Fifth Avenue, New York City 3. Consult local telephone books for local branches.

ALMOST AS OLD as the NAACP is the National Urban League for Social Service Among Negroes (1133 Broadway, New York City 10), with its aims "Interracial Cooperation in Action." Founded in 1910, it now has affiliated local Leagues in 47 cities. Its major fields of service are investigation and research, community organization and planning, employment, housing, health, and education and recreation. It maintains a Bureau of Vocational Guidance, has a Fellowship plan for training social service workers, and a very vigorous division of industrial relations. It publishes *Opportunity*, now a quarterly (\$1.50 a year) with each issue devoted to a special field of interest such as Negro Womanpower in the War Effort or the Negro in Government, etc.

CG READERS ARE URGED to keep asking at their local motion picture theatres for the new War Department film, "The Negro Soldier." Graphically and movingly, it portrays the role of the Negro in the Army of the United States, with interesting historical sequences showing the past contributions of Negroes in all wars from Lexington and Concord on down, though the main part of the story deals with the Negro soldier in the present war. The film (42 minutes running time) was produced under the supervision of Colonel Frank Capra of the Signal Corps. The script is by Carlton Moss. The picture is a definite step toward better interracial understanding and deserves and needs to be shown widely. CG readers can be extremely useful in getting it before local audiences.

MRS. AFTON DILL NANCE of 355 North El Molino, Pasadena, California, will put individual youngsters or class teachers in touch with the proper authorities in the War Relocation Centers for an exchange of correspondence between Japanese American boys and girls and youngsters of other backgrounds on the "outside." Write Mrs. Nance directly.

A PREPUBLICATION LOOK at Lillian Smith's *Strange Fruit* (Reynal & Hitchcock. \$2.75)—out too late for review in this issue—has CG editors very enthusiastic. It will be one of the most talked of books of the year, and CG readers are urged to buy, read, and pass on copies. Available at your bookstores or from CG.

MIMEOGRAPHED BACKGROUND MATERIAL as well as a simple syllabus of procedure for organizing "What's Cooking in Your Neighbor's Pot" parties may be obtained for 15 cents after April 1 from Mrs. De Witt Stetten, Common Council for American Unity, 222 Fourth Avenue, New York City 3. (See page 81.)

## • Schools and Teachers •

### EDUCATION FOR RESETTLEMENT

MONIKA KEHOE

WHY do they study English so greedily?" I asked. "You can't tell me these little old ladies who have led such private, protected lives in their isolated communities, have all of a sudden been inoculated with a passion for America and the English language?"

I was puzzled. I had been told about these Americanization classes before I ever had anything to do with Adult Education at Rivers (Relocation Center on the Pima Indian Reservation about forty miles south of Phoenix, Arizona, where some ten thousand people of Japanese ancestry, evacuated from the Pacific Coast Defense Command, are preparing themselves psychologically and occupationally for resettlement in the eastern and mid-western states). I knew they were swamped with students—some who walked all the way across the camp to attend, some who had put books and reading away for so long their eyes could not focus on a page less than two feet away. Their teachers reported over a third had glasses out of adjustment and were unable to do any close reading. (We have since been able to get special appointments with the optometrist for three of the worst cases. The rest must wait from three to six months for their turn.) Full of shyness and shamefacedness, they read the only textbooks available—primers discarded by the elementary school and fingermarked by their own grandchildren:

THE LITTLE RED CHAIR.  
SEE MY LITTLE CHAIR.  
IT IS RED.  
IT IS A ROCKING CHAIR.

And these women, most of them around fifty years of age—or, at least, looking fiftyish from plentiful work and parenthood—are laborers during the day. They hold full-time jobs in the laundry, on the farm, in the hospital, or in the mess halls. Their night classes come after a regular eight-hour shift of strenuous work.

I asked one of the evacuee teachers to explain such ambition. "There are many reasons," she said, "and most of them are personal. For example, Mrs. Yoshimoto there." Mrs. Yoshimoto gave the characteristic little bow, and smiled as she passed by us on her way down the steps. "She has a son in the Army and she wants to learn English so she can read the letters he writes her."

"Is there no one to read them to her?" I asked.

"Her daughter reads them and sums all up by saying, 'He says he's O.K., Ma, and sends love.' Mrs. Yoshimoto wants to know what else is on all those pages her 'teen-age daughter is too busy to read to her."

The men come to school, too, but the majority, already knowing English through business necessity, attend Auto Mechanics classes, Woodshop, or another vocational course, meeting in the evening. Expert vegetable and fruit growers for the most part, they are faced not only with resettlement and readjustment to new communities, socially and economically, but also vocationally. They cannot at this time go back to the fertile valleys of Southern California; they must turn eastward to the industrial cities, to the

## COMMON GROUND

wheat-growing plains and the cattle farms of the Midwest. Men of Japanese ancestry are not cattlemen either in build or temperament. While they can work miracles of greenness in a garden, they are confounded by the squeals of a stuck pig. Yet through perseverance and determination they have become good dairymen here on the project and have helped brand cattle with success. Accustomed to the slow unfolding of a bud, their minds and reactions are understandably surprised by the swiftness and bulk of a roped steer. In spite of their antipathy to cattle, they come persistently and in large numbers to learn about cattle. After a regular work-week they turn out on Sunday morning to devote half of their holiday to the class in Beef Production. The enrollment is so large the course must be divided into two groups to accommodate an otherwise unwieldy number.

The same intensive interest is found among the ship-model apprentices. In the factory at Rivers (which is under contract with the United States Navy to produce model ships for training purposes), the evacuee workers, both men and women, have asked for an additional night class in which they may have the opportunity to develop supplementary machine and woodshop skills for relocation. These full-time employees, it must be remembered, are receiving a wage of only sixteen dollars per month according to the scale in effect on the project. Such pay can hardly be said to offer incentive to working overtime or developing a desire for a wider knowledge of the trade. Only one drive can explain such ambition—the intention to relocate and be self-sufficient economically in a normal community. They are willing to give their time and their best efforts to retrain themselves for occupations contributing to the war effort. Unfortunately in many cases, due

to the various clearances which must be procured, it is very difficult to place the Nisei in war industry, even when they are qualified occupationally. But they want to be producing citizens as much as any other American.

Now that “segregation” (the removal to Tule Lake Center of those evacuees and their families claiming loyalty to Japan) is complete, the percentage enrollment of Issei adults in the Night School steadily increases. As the younger generation relocates, the older people gradually overcome their feeling of shyness and, with each other for protection, invade the school precincts in ever growing numbers. Among this older population there is likewise a noticeable urge toward adopting American manners and dress and a great curiosity about American folk-ways and ideology. These Issei tend to relocate more slowly because of greater language and vocational handicaps as well as a more deep-seated fear of “the outside” with its insecurities and antagonisms. From an educational point of view this is probably desirable since the group is thus more homogeneous and permanent. Language experiments in the teaching of Basic English, for example, can be carried on under better controlled conditions.

Besides the English-language courses, which are very popular with the women, the Pattern Drafting classes attract great numbers. Of the adults enrolled, over half are registered in these classes. One of the “appointed personnel” in the Employment Division asked for an explanation of the heavy attendance in a vocational course which supplied workers for a limited number of highly skilled placements in the textile industry. In my efforts to find a satisfactory answer to his inquiry, I discovered one of the major problems confronting the Americanization of Issei women. “American clothes don’t fit,”

## SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

they told me. They are made for girls and women of a very different stature. Even the pattern measurements cannot be altered without making a new pattern. Dresses cannot be bought ready-made without redesigning. So the Issei women and many Nisei girls must learn to make their own patterns as well as their own clothes! The Pattern Drafting classes then turn out to be part of a Home Economics rather than a strictly vocational course. One begins to realize there are obstacles of many kinds, other than language, interfering with the assimilation of a people. Imagine being denied recourse to the Sears, Roebuck fashion catalogue in such an isolated colony!

Whereas Pattern Drafting, Woodshop, Auto Mechanics, and some other vocational courses can be carried on with a minimum of language difficulty and a maximum of practical demonstration, there are graver communication handicaps in academic subjects offered to Issei who have a limited comprehension of English. In an effort to surmount some of these, we have found a visual aids program invaluable. The response of the residents to our film schedule has been excellent. At every showing to date, there has been a capacity turn-out. The relocation pictures, "The Middle States," "Ohio," "Chicago," and "The New England States," for instance, have brought before the evacuees, in some cases, their first glimpse of their future homes. These we could not have described to them as well orally and then only through an

interpreter. In the same way, American History, if it is to be taught to the older Japanese, must be taught largely through visual aid materials which supplement the illustrated language books used in the Americanization classes. These texts, salvaged from National Citizenship League cast-offs of the naturalization program, are proving useful and pertinent to the needs of these friendly aliens. Vocational films in poultry, milk production, and auto mechanics have also met with very favorable acceptance and have assisted tremendously in communicating to the students certain technical details which they might otherwise have missed through lack of language skills.

Thus with "junk" textbooks and "free" films (on loan from state and university agencies); with "voluntary" teachers working at night on compensatory time from the high and elementary schools, and "borrowed" equipment; with no traditional background to lean on—in fact, running contrary to cultural norms—Adult Education at Rivers plans to help further Americanize the remaining adult population of the Center and fit them to take their places in normal democratic communities.

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# • The Pursuit of Liberty •

CONDUCTED BY MILTON R. KONVITZ

## WHITE PRIMARY CASE IN SUPREME COURT

IN a one-party state the real election is the primary. In such a state the best way to disfranchise the Negro is by keeping him away from the primary polls, and this is done in all the southern states except Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina. Thus, in typical states like South Carolina and Texas, the Democratic State Conventions have adopted rules barring Negroes from participation, and these rules are strictly enforced. Yet some states which enforce the white primary rules permit illiterates to vote: an illiterate white thus may cast his ballot, though a Negro college president is barred. With but rare exception during the 20th century, only Democrats have been elected in some of these white primary states. The white primary rule of the Democratic Party thus effectively disfranchises the Negro in these states. Many Negro leaders are therefore more interested in the fight to eliminate the white primary than in the abolition of the poll tax; for what is the good in having the right to vote without paying the tax if this means only that one may vote in the final election but not in the primary? In such a case the Negro voter may have a choice merely between a Bilbo or a Talmadge—each a far cry, indeed, from his heart's desire.

A case is now pending in the United States Supreme Court which may result in the outlawing of the white primary. If the Court will face the issues squarely and will afford the Negro petitioner full relief, the decision will be of the greatest significance to the race.

The case specifically attacks the Texas white primary. The petition shows that any white elector, regardless of party affiliation, may vote in the Texas Democratic Party primary; that county officials perform duties in the primary election without cost to the Party or candidates; that certain expenses incurred by the Party are paid by the candidates but not by Party members; that, in the words of the *Classic Case*, the Texas primary is "an integral part of the procedure of choice," and that the Democratic primary "effectively controls the choice" of United States Senators and Representatives; that the conduct of the election judges in denying petitioner a ballot to vote in the Democratic primary was "state action," and this action was in violation of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.

The chief hurdle petitioner must overcome is a prior decision of the Supreme Court, in *Grovey v. Townsend*, which held that the exclusion of Negroes from the Texas Democratic primary was not "state action," but the action of the Party's convention, which is a private assembly. Now it is argued that in the earlier case the factual situation was inadequately presented to the Court, so that precedent should not control.

The Supreme Court has expressly overruled hoary precedents without much hesitation. If it is so minded, it can declare the earlier decision no longer binding and hold the white primary, root and branch, unconstitutional, and thus make the right of suffrage more than an empty phrase to millions of citizens.

## WHITE LABOR UNION BEFORE COURTS

No less important than the right to vote is the right to work. In these days of collective bargaining a union that bars Negro workers from membership effectively bars them from jobs. There are seven unaffiliated unions, and thirteen unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, that by constitution, ritual, or custom bar Negroes from membership. In addition there are two independent and seven AFL unions that admit Negroes only into special auxiliary locals. The auxiliary local is a Jim-Crow device whereby the Negro is not only segregated but is deprived of rights enjoyed by members of the white locals. Thus, in the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers, a white worker may join if he is under 70 years of age, but a Negro may join the auxiliary only if he is under 60; the affairs of the auxiliary are managed by a supervising white local; the auxiliary has no voice in dealings with employers; the business agents of the white local act for the auxiliary, but the latter has no voice in their selection; the grievance committee of the white local acts for the auxiliary; Negroes are not permitted a change in classification, as from helper to journeyman, without permission from the white local; Negroes may be assigned to jobs only through the agency of the white local; Negroes have no voice in the affairs of the International; Negroes pay as much as do white members, but their death and disability benefits are only half of those paid to white members. Several cases have been recently brought which involve the question of the legality of the auxiliary or Jim-Crow union.

One was brought in the Rhode Island Superior Court at Providence. There the white local had disregarded the practice

of the International Brotherhood, and it took in some five hundred Negro workers on a basis of complete equality. Nominally there was an auxiliary, but the Negroes were permitted to participate freely in the affairs of the "white" local and were treated as members. But the International decided to step in and break up this democratic practice. At an election in December, at which Negro members voted with white, an International vice-president appeared and impounded the Negroes' ballots and refused to count them in the election. The Negro workers went to court, alleging that the action of the vice-president was illegal; that the action was a form of racial discrimination in violation of the President's FEPC Order; that auxiliary status is a form of involuntary servitude and an unreasonable restraint on the liberty of contract. The Court agreed with the Negroes and issued a temporary injunction on January 8th. In California, however, a three-judge Federal District Court dismissed a similar complaint on January 6th on technical jurisdictional grounds.

The exclusion of Negroes from jobs through a race bar in unions or through Jim-Crow practices outrages the basic principles of the democratic pattern of life. It remains for the courts to say that it is also against the United States Constitution.

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## • The Press •

### A VICTORIOUS NEW YEAR TO YOU—AMERICA!

(Editorial in the *Manzanar Free Press*, Manzanar Relocation Center, California, January 1, 1944, Roy M. Takeno, editor.)

GREETINGS to you for a Victorious New Year, people of America, from your kindred 50,000 citizens inside barbed wire fences. We send you greetings, we who have been lodged by circumstances of war inside these Relocation Centers in the deserts of the West.

In seeking to resettle and to re-establish ourselves in our respective trades, businesses, and professions, we realize the unwisdom of trying to force ourselves upon a people who view us with suspicion. We only seek to join in the drive for Victory. We are prepared to shoulder our share of further sacrifices demanded of all her citizens by our country. We will not shirk. Indeed, evacuees who already have left the Relocation Projects are contributing to our embattled nation's war effort through their initiative, their resourcefulness, their adaptability, and their talents. In Europe, in the South Pacific, on every front, former evacuees

are today in uniform fighting beside their brother Americans. . . .

It is our belief that our country wants to fulfill the obligation to itself to permit the unhampered restoration of a group of its own people to their natural and rightful niche in the American scheme of life through an orderly process of evacuee resettlement. In the ultimate analysis, the citizen evacuees who are behind these barbed wire fences, through no fault of their own, are not persuaded to resettle by glittering promises of job offers. The important consideration is that they be convinced in their own minds that they are acceptable to American communities as Americans and that in relocation lies their service to their country.

We believe that you are earnestly concerned in the process of revitalizing the American scheme of social structure which recognizes only aristocracy by intellect and by achievement; not through political, religious, or racial differences. We believe that on this conviction, America rests her cause in this war. . . .

### A SHAMELESS DISCRIMINATION

(An editorial from the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, 42 East 23rd Street, New York City 10, October 27, 1943, Mardiros Sarkisian, editor.)

JUST recently, "Nor Or," our Armenian-language colleague of Fresno, California, reported an ugly incident which should prove extremely disturbing to all fair-minded Americans, regardless of origin, parentage, or stock. The report told of

restrictions put up by the directors of the Bank of America in respect to occupying or purchasing real estate in certain sections of the city of Fresno. These restrictions, violently discriminatory in nature, prohibit Armenians, among other Asiatic and Oriental nationality groups, and their descendants (meaning their American-born children) to own or occupy property in those sections unless they are em-

ployed as servants by the residents of the above-mentioned areas.

While this revolting discrimination was being put into effect, the sons of those Armenians and Chinese, Negroes and other nationals were gallantly fighting . . . and dying heroically by the thousands to protect and defend the property and the lives of these directors. . . .

But this . . . is not an isolated case. Its ramifications extend from the Pacific Coast to the Middle West, to the South and the Eastern States. In each section it shows its ugly head in a different form, under different circumstances. But no matter what the form or the circumstance, it is the most abhorrent symptom of nazi-fascist ideology against which there has been a war going on for the past four years. The perpetrators of this discrimination . . . are deliberately stirring a hatred which may inflame one group of Americans against another. They are sowing the seeds of future race riots. . . .

It is utterly humiliating to learn that Sergeant Victor Maghakian, the oft be-medalled Marine hero of Fresno, and Lieutenant Ray Melikian, who but yesterday was proclaimed Fresno's most outstanding young man of 1942, cannot buy or occupy property in certain sections of Fresno.

Neither these young men nor their children and parents can own or occupy a home in the restricted areas. . . .

The present flare-up is a manifestation of a deadly symptom which is gradually rising to the surface against various nationality groups, in different forms and in different parts of the country. Therefore there is only one way open to fight against this and any other discrimination which may be aimed to disseminate hatred among the component groups comprising this great Democracy. To fight it whenever and wherever it shows its ugly head. The peace and security of this land is one and indivisible.

## EQUALITY AND DOGS

(From a regular column, "Here to Yonder," by Langston Hughes in the *Chicago Defender*, December 11, 1943.)

Now you take this here social equality that white folks are always bringing up," said my Simple-Minded Friend. "I don't understand it. They socialize with dogs—yet they don't want to socialize with me."

"True," I said.

"White dogs, black dogs, any kind of dogs," Simple went on. "They don't care what color the dog is." . . .

"You see plenty of dogs walking with white ladies on Park Avenue," I said.

"But no Negroes," Simple added.

"That's right," I said.

"They walk dogs and work Negroes," explained Simple. "While them rich white ladies is out walking with their dogs, the Negroes are working back in their kitchens."

"Were working back in their kitchens," I said. "They're mostly in defense now—self-defense."

"Them rich white folks give their big old yard dogs they don't like much to defense work, too. The Army trains 'em to fight just like a man. But the Army mostly trains Negroes to work—quartermasters, engineers, Seabees. . . ."

"Yes."

## COMMON GROUND

"Um-hum-m-m! But they train them dogs to fight. Why, I saw a picture of a dog getting a medal on his chest for fighting so good he tore down a machine-gun nest. It were in a white paper where I ain't never seen no picture of a Negro soldier getting a medal on his chest. Every time they have pictures of Negroes in uniform, they are always unloading some landing barge or digging on some road. A dog gets a better break in the Army than a Negro."

"You sound rather bitter," I said, "about your Army."

"How do you figger it's my Army?" asked Simple.

"You pay taxes for it," I said.

"I do," said Simple, "but it pays me no mind. It Jim Crows me—but it don't Jim Crow no dogs. White dogs and black dogs all serve together in the Army. They don't have no Jim Crow cars for the black dogs."

"You have got something there," I said.

"I had rather be a dog in this man's Army down South any time than colored. Why, I saw in the newsreels where they train them dogs to leap at a man and try to tear him down—a white man at that. But if I even as much as raise a hand at a cracker when he pushes me off the sidewalk, my head is beat and I am put in jail. But a dog in the Army, they teach him not to let nobody push him off no sidewalk. Here I am a human, and I get less of a break in the U.S. than a dog! I do not understand it."

"Neither do I," I said.

"How come you ain't arguing with me today?" asked Simple. "You mighty near always disagree."

"How can I disagree about dogs," I said. "I remember in depression times, when they had the NYA and the WPA and the PWA and all those things that it was so hard to get on—and that you got so little from after you did get on. Well, I remember seeing folks come into stores and buy great big pieces of good red meat for their dogs, while plenty colored folks, and white, too, didn't have meat for themselves and their children. I said to myself then that it must be good to be a dog."

"Eating meat and not having to worry about getting on WPA! Black dogs and white dogs and all eating good red meat, and no color line between 'em. . . . I tell you, dogs rate better in America than me—colored dogs."

"Anyhow, I love dogs," I said, "and I'm glad they get a break in our paradoxical society."

"I love dogs, too," said Simple. "But I love colored folks better."

"Then you want to take the meat out of a dog's mouth, and the medals off his chest?"

"I do not," said Simple. "I just want some meat in my mouth, and some medals for us, too. That's all! I just want the same chance as has a dog. Do you want to argue about that?"

"I do not want to argue about that," I said. "No, I do not want to argue."

## • The Bookshelf •

CONDUCTED BY HENRY C. TRACY

### TOWARD THE AMERICAN CREED

**AN AMERICAN DILEMMA.** Gunnar Myrdal. New York: Harper. In two volumes. 1483 pp. \$7.50

The outgrowth of five years of study sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation, and itself a work of the highest distinction by a social economist of international reputation, this is the most impressive study we have seen of the Negro in American society. It stresses the fact that the "Negro problem" is one created by white Americans: they have defined the Negro in terms which make his presence a problem. As Dr. Myrdal puts it, their definition of the Negro is "a social definition" and without biological foundation. But, as he makes equally clear, it is beliefs and not facts which determine such social and other difficult relations, and nothing is harder than to break down beliefs with a purpose. Thus the whole subject moves over into an ethical field and becomes a moral issue. "The American Negro Problem is a problem in the heart of the American people"—it is there that the decisive struggle goes on between the "American creed" and jealousies of social, sexual, and economic nature. We find here a fine analysis of that creed, which people of many cultures and national origins accept as their ideal—with the paradox that while they constantly invoke it, they habitually fail to realize it in practice. But the "American creed" is gradually realizing itself, is still growing, and pro-Negro leadership rightly appeals to it and pins its best hope on it. Fourth in the series on The Negro in American Life, *An American Dilemma*

treats every phase of the problem—political, economic, social, educational, religious—with a fine sense of the social and psychic tensions involved, and with dispassionate analysis. These two volumes cannot be recommended too highly. They are indispensable to Americans who are reaching out for sound and human understanding of black-white relationships in this country. They should be on the shelves of every town and school library throughout the country, and COMMON GROUND readers should see they get there and are widely used and discussed.

*Get Together Americans* by Rachel Davis-Dubois (Harper, \$1.75) is a manual for doing just that. Long a worker in intercultural education and sponsor of many successful endeavors in schools and communities where real results have been achieved, Dr. Dubois writes from her own experience. Her work in this field is founded on a wise and wholly human philosophy, with room in it for joyousness, friendliness, and the gifts all can bring. Neighborhood-home festivals, here described, open the way to such friendliness, offer a chance for a spontaneous release of social gifts as varied as the culturally mixed community may provide. Dr. Dubois is sure the barriers can come down "if men can first be helped to regard one another as persons."

But Howard W. Odum in *Race and Rumors of Race* (Chapel Hill, \$2) reveals a state of tension in the South in which folk of two cultures cannot get together, owing to "inexorable conditioning in a cultural complex" (his phrase) among a majority of the whites. His book is a plea

for a better understanding, on the part of the nation at large, of a condition which has become organic in the South through the impress of centuries; which has knit up white folkways with stateways and identified the same with such loyalties as home, family, and church. Insofar as this plea is designed to reach the caste-bound Southerner, Dr. Odum's approach is marked by consummate tact. It does not condone, yet it cannot offend. The South, which has flattered itself that it was doing much for the Negro and solving its problem in terms of a "good" bi-racial set-up of relations, is asked whether it has even touched the basic factor in that problem, or is willing to. The implied answer to both questions seems to be No and makes profoundly discouraging reading for the rest of the nation. The heart and core of the Southern credo (summed up here in 21 points) revolves around the belief that "The Negro is a Negro and nothing more" and must be kept "in his place." While this creed holds, the problem can never be solved, can only grow worse. Although the "crisis" situation is acknowledged and underlined in the long section devoted to a delineation of race rumors that have swept the South, there is little of creative courage in devising "The Way Out and the Way On." There is a brief dismissal of the Southern Conference on Human Welfare (which has done some courageous work) as a group whose "genesis" was "outside the South" and whose methods followed "somewhat the patterns of many of the more emotional reform organizations." There is no mention of Lillian Smith and Paula Snelling and the rapid growth of South Today with its quiet courage and direct speaking out against segregation. There is only a detailed account of the development of the Southern Regional Council [discussed elsewhere in this issue. Ed.], which seems

essentially too cautious and undynamic to respond to the needs of a crisis situation; and a final chapter of questions to be answered before solutions can be reached. This, I repeat, is a discouraging book.

*To Stem This Tide* by Charles S. Johnson (Pilgrim Press. \$1) ranges beyond the South to report Negro-white relations the country over in industry, in rural areas, transportation, housing, the armed forces, etc. Discrimination is common in the North and West even when employers profess willingness to do away with it. Inescapably, Dr. Johnson concludes, "Negro status and the support of it, in the minds of a large part of the white public, are a moral challenge of the American tenets of democracy and Christian brotherhood"; the issues involved "may bring us to a critical point of decision. The American people may have to decide whether to incorporate this persistently rejected group into their system of moral obligations and Christian fellowship, or revise the system itself downward to a more comfortable tolerance of permanent injustice."

*Race Riot* (Dryden Press. \$1.50) by Alfred McClung Lee and Norman Humphrey, sociology professors at Wayne University, shows plainly that last summer's Detroit riot was incited by rumor, but that rumor acted on a long background of race tension ready to flare at any provocation. It demonstrates clearly that race prejudice and discriminatory practices if neglected, ignorance and bigotry if they go uncorrected, breed disaster. Views privately held by privileged people and adroitly catered to by politicians can turn to brute madness in a populace excited by event or rumor. It is interesting to note that no rioting occurred in those sections where whites and Negroes lived as neighbors and knew each other. This report embodies valuable hints on the preven-

tion of riots and the promotion of interracial experience that will remove the cause for them.

John LaFarge in *The Race Question and the Negro* (Longmans, Green. \$2.50) states the position of the Catholic Church—unequivocal in its condemnation of any code, civil or social which denies moral unity of human beings regardless of supposed racial differences. Father LaFarge draws on many years of intimate contact with Negro groups within the southern tradition to write clearly and reasonably on the practical issues connected with racism.

*Race and Crime* by the late Willem Adriaan Bongers, leading criminologist of the Netherlands, newly translated from the Dutch by Margaret M. Hordyk (Columbia University Press. \$1.50) disposes of the notion that criminality can be an attribute of a race. Crime is anti-social action, and only under certain circumstances can elementary inclinations become anti-social. Herbert Apthekar's ex-

haustive study of *American Negro Slave Revolts* (Columbia University Press. \$4.50) bears out this conclusion, showing that the American slave-holding aristocracy provided the circumstances under which elementary inclination quite natural in an African slave became anti-social with respect to a class (their owners) who continuously and incessantly imposed on him the concept of inferiority—not merely on him as an individual but on his entire race—so that he could never hope to gain recognition as a human person. Precisely this concept, we have ruefully to reflect, a large section of our people still desires to impose on that race. The "Machinery of Control" here described amounted to a conspiracy on the part of a ruling class to maintain their supremacy by force. Liberals there were, as early as 1790, who advocated other means of winning the loyalty and regard of the Negro, but they were always in a minority, as even today when a majority seems bent on the mode of arrogance and suppression.

## THE AMERICAN SCENE

For compressed, comprehensive reportage on the people of the East, South, West, and Midwest and how they take the war, individually, sectionally, and otherwise—read Selden Menefee's *Assignment: U.S.A.* (Reynal & Hitchcock. \$3). Commissioned by Princeton University's Office of Public Opinion Research, Menefee visited cities, towns, and villages throughout the country, gathering from all types of persons this record of things done and felt; all of it first-hand reportage, and first class. The coverage is immense. The war spirit, economic revolution in the South, anti-labor and anti-Negro agitation, the housing shortage, isolationism (dy-

ing), party loyalties, are only a few of the topics discussed.

In *Mainstream* (Reynal & Hitchcock. \$2.50) Hamilton Basso gives us "John Applegate"—typical American citizen—and tells us how he arrived at his ideas and social aims, too often shaped by prejudice "as useless as his appendix and just as likely to become inflamed." The men he has admired as "great" or worth emulating were largely instrumental in forming him. They include a number of public characters—among them P. T. Barnum, Andrew Carnegie, T. R. Roosevelt—whose mastery of publicity, of money-making, of impulsive showmanship

in big roles appealed to a common citizen already predisposed to believe in "getting results" at whatever cost. The list of heroes and popular idols is a large one, the essays shrewd, and the handling humorous rather than cynical. We see a tendency among these popular idols to avoid facing real issues, a trait that soon fastened on the common man who, now that all the issues have become acute, still dodges them or looks for a leader to put them out of sight—unsolved.

Joseph Kinsey Howard in *Montana* (Yale University Press. \$3) finds this same trait in the Far West which, "traditionally cheerful and carefree, dodges self-analysis like a plague." Mr. Howard, for twenty years a newspaper man and now editor in the state of his choice, gives us Montana as an object lesson in American imperialism. This is the story of exploitation by the eastern mining, banking, industrial, and other interests—all determined to take out of that hinterland its fabulous natural wealth and leave as little as possible to the resident white population, which in turn wasted what was left to it—even the precious soil—with a careless ignorance of which the Indian was never guilty. There are rustlers and robber-barons in the picture, too, with copper wars and dustbowls and drought. But the main intent is social reclamation and economic betterment.

Irene Paden wrote *The Wake of the Prairie Schooner* (Macmillan. \$3) to give us the story, spirit, and color of the old western trails, which she followed with her husband, long an expert researcher in this field. This book is the result of nine years of field work, rendered with authenticity and charm.

*A Short History of the American Democracy* by John D. Hicks of California University (Houghton Mifflin. \$5.50) is a complete "down to Tunisia account" in 859 pages. Here is an accurate and un-

biased coverage made vivid by illustrated pages in which historic paintings, drawings, charts, and photographs are reproduced, as well as period-maps.

A bit of recent history appears in the form of lithographs, drawings, and water colors in *The Spirit of Hawaii* by A. S. MacLeod (Harper. \$4). He gives us Hawaii before and after Pearl Harbor. The nature scenes and black and whites are particularly striking, and the social ones well chosen. A brief but adequate text supplements both.

*Mother America* by Col. Carlos P. Romulo (Doubleday Doran. \$2.50) is unusually interesting as a reflection in the mind of a Filipino citizen of the best that is in the American people—as embodied in their political acts and personal relations as he has known them, and their achievements in the Philippines. He calls his book "a living story of democracy," in which pledges made by our government were fulfilled and the loyalty of the Filipinos earned and deserved. Col. Romulo poses this practical demonstration—"political science personalized"—against Japanese and all other forms of imperialism including that of American vested interests. His wide knowledge of his subject, grasp of detail, and integrity in handling make this an impressive document.

Of Hans Natonek's *In Search of Myself* (Putnam. \$2.75), we might say that it records the first impressions of Americans, as observed by an intelligent foreigner during the first years of a questing adjustment. But we have had that before—this is different. The difference lies in the approach. It is that of a sensitive man without means, distinguished at home but unknown here, critical of the "successism" he finds here, stubbornly determined to have no part in it. Sensitized would be a better word, for this well known European writer (Prague his birthplace) has long

trained himself to perceive real values in personal and social life and spurn the spurious. Urged to "get busy, forget the past, embrace the new," and change him-

self overnight into the mere simulacrum of an American, he refuses. This book contains the reasons, and much besides, in pungent and penetrating comment.

## LIBERALISM AND THE PASSING OF EMPIRE

World events demand a new liberalism, and books may help activate it. Few are more stimulating, less dogmatic than *Common Cause* by G. A. Borgese (Duell, Sloan & Pearce. \$3.50). A man of Old-World culture and discipline, he has made the New-World spirit his own. With richly allusive passages, with drive, virility and pungency of language, he lifts us over the shoals to a better footing on political shores toward which events are carrying us. The props of empire have fallen. The old regime is historically dead. Ruthless but not insensitive, this author can write of a country "more Greek than Greece" (Mrs. Miniver's England) seeing which, filmed, one is moved "almost to tears by the decency and delicacy" there portrayed, yet whose weakness was in "refusing credence to the existence of radical evil."

Eric Fischer's *The Passing of the European Age* (Harvard University Press. \$2.50) advances the thesis that centers of civilization have shifted from Europe to lands overseas or, as in Russia, to Siberian Asia. Bonds between the old and new may well persist, but not bondage; not exploitation of colonial people in the new age that is here.

Louis Fischer writes *Empire* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce. \$1) out of his observations as foreign correspondent in lands under British rule. Here the notion of Empire is cleared of much supporting rationalization and set down as a pattern

by which industrial interests, also feudatory native states, maintain privileges and retard economic and educational progress in the countries concerned.

*God's Englishman* by Leland Dewitt Baldwin (Little, Brown. \$3) is a unique, a surprising book. The title, taken from Milton, is used half humorously yet with a hint that the English have a vocation after all—to keep alive the Anglo-Saxon spirit and to share it with the world in its true implications: personal integrity, conscience, inalienable rights. A blending of Briton, Celt, Saxon, Norman, and Scot was molded into the pattern we call Anglo-Saxon: a mind-type—one of methods and attitudes rather than of clear-cut goals—and not a matter of race. The proper story of England is that of the emergence and evolution of this type. It goes back to the Stone Age, through Stonehenge, and on through those successive invasions and waves of population, rule, amalgamation, social, political, and religious conflict we call English history. But in all texts on that subject we have met nothing like this: a history of the English people which keeps ever in clear view the central core and theme of it—the individual conscience and its struggles against church, state, and every other irresponsible power, whether that of a Cromwell or a king. Imperialism is seen as a concept alien to this conscience and this type of mind; the British Empire the work of ambitious individuals backed by

predatory groups. The Empire is no concern of the common folk, and their growing distrust of it is, in Dr. Baldwin's view, "the happy reason why it has always been doomed."

Always the dream of a normal American, *Liberal Education* as Mark Van Doren describes it (Holt. \$2.50) is the common right of all, not that of a selected few or of the privileged. But our higher institutions, while they provide special education for a few, tend to confuse the minds of many by a multiplicity of courses now in no way integrated. The result cannot be called "liberal" and is one reason for failure of many to believe in the necessity of thought. The system calls for revision. Strong in its contention that we must have contagious contact with the great minds of all time, must know the best of which the human mind is capable, and gain power through such knowing, Mr. Van Doren's vigorous discussion

should clear the subject alike for those who cannot take the formal courses our colleges offer, or who, having taken them, are disappointed. This book does not displace Everett Dean Martin's earlier *The Meaning of a Liberal Education*; rather supports and supplements it.

To a democratic American the reading of a one-volume Jefferson library—*The Complete Jefferson*, arranged and assembled by Saul K. Padover (Duell, Sloan & Pearce. \$5) might well seem a sound basis for a liberal education. Besides the papers on statecraft, legislation, foreign policies, and national economy, there are notes on religion, science, philosophy, and education, and personal papers that reveal Jefferson's poetic feeling as well as his versatility and sensitive spirit. Sixty-five pages of addresses to Indians demonstrate the man's tact and wisdom in human relations. This is the record of one of the greatest minds America has produced.

## LIFE AND FICTION

In place of a new novel, Ellen Glasgow in *A Certain Measure* (Harcourt, Brace. \$3.50) gives us the means of understanding all her novels and hence their author, since these books have been her life. This is the story of "a solitary revolt against the formal, the false, the affected, the sentimental, and the pretentious in Southern writing." It is also a protest against the late vogue for degeneracy in the name of realism—which is no realism. We get a clear notion of what—to a novelist of character—the novel is for, and much good comment on fiction as an art.

But life and fiction—real characters and story-pattern—blend in Gladys Hasty Carroll's *Dunnybrook* (Macmillan. \$2.75). This is the fictionized history of

the real people of a New England community, with lead characters from the author's own ancestral line. She gathers threads from their lives and weaves them into a fabric which reveals the soul of the common folk of New England, their hardy, hopeful spirit, homely fidelity, and power to distill much of human good out of very scanty means.

John Herscy, American correspondent for *Time* and *Life* wrote *A Bell for Adano* (Knopf. \$2.50) to show how the folk of an Italian town newly freed from fascism function in the effort to restore a sound civic and social life. This is a close-up of the people groping—with the help of Italian Americans in our forces—toward a democratic way.

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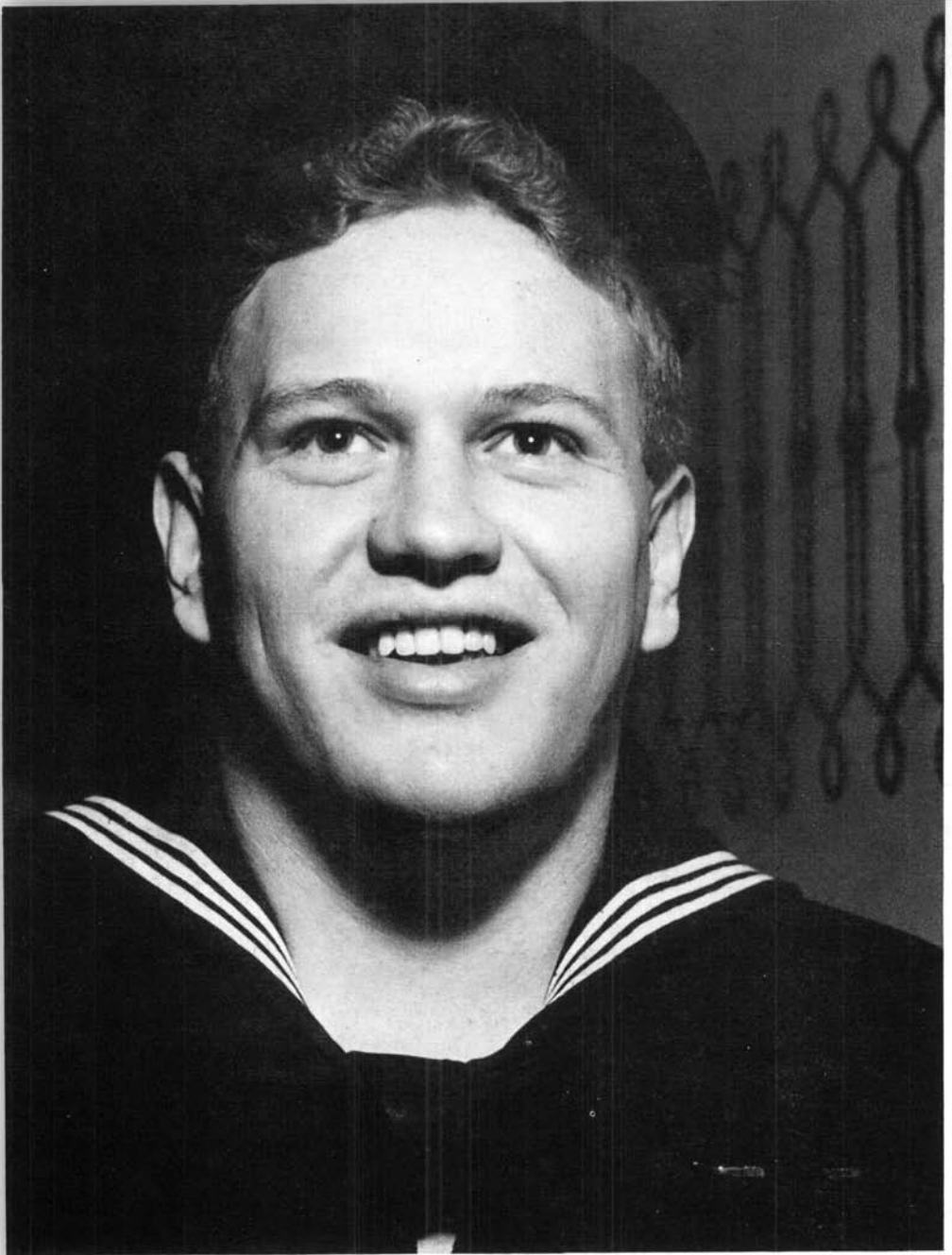
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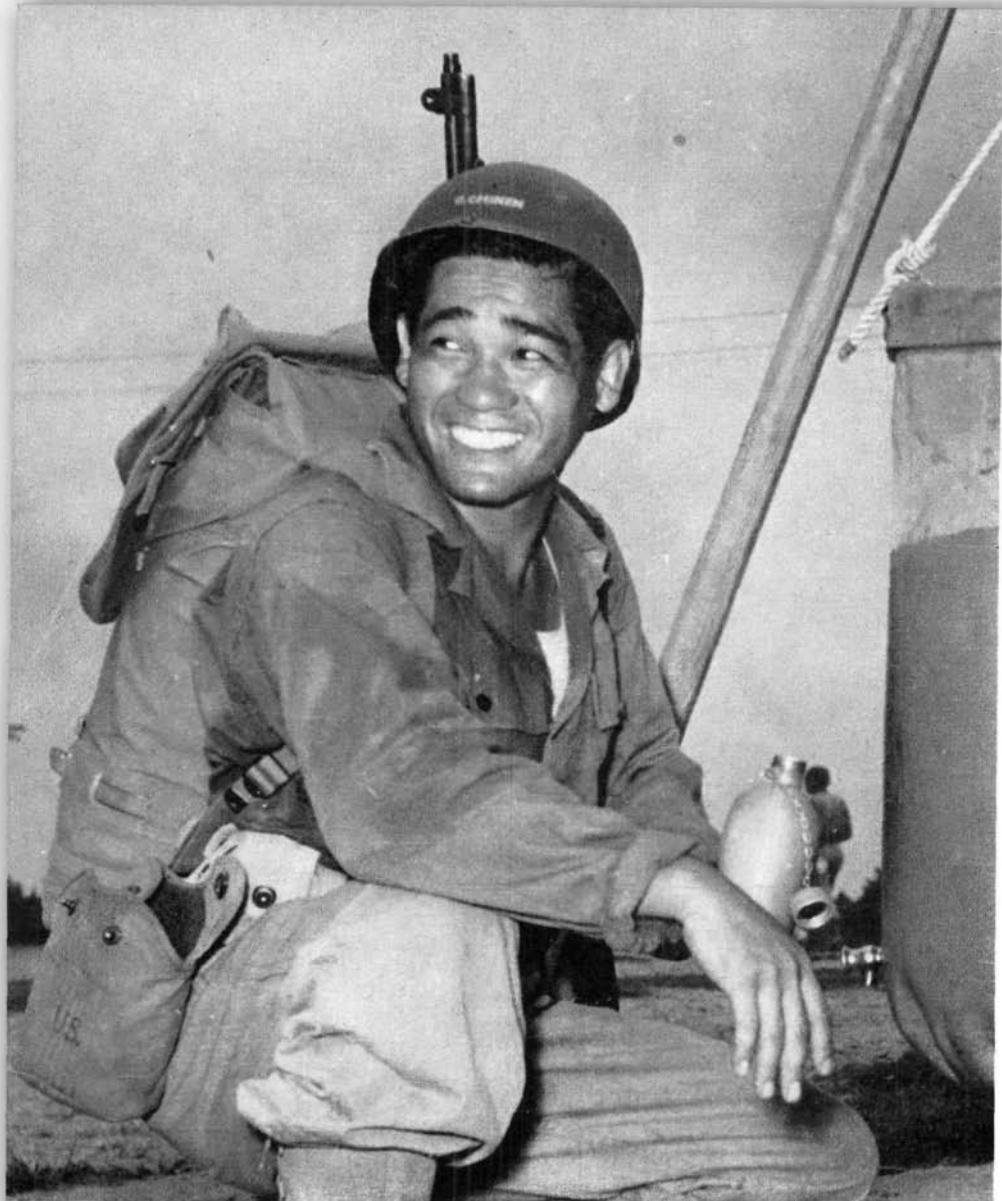
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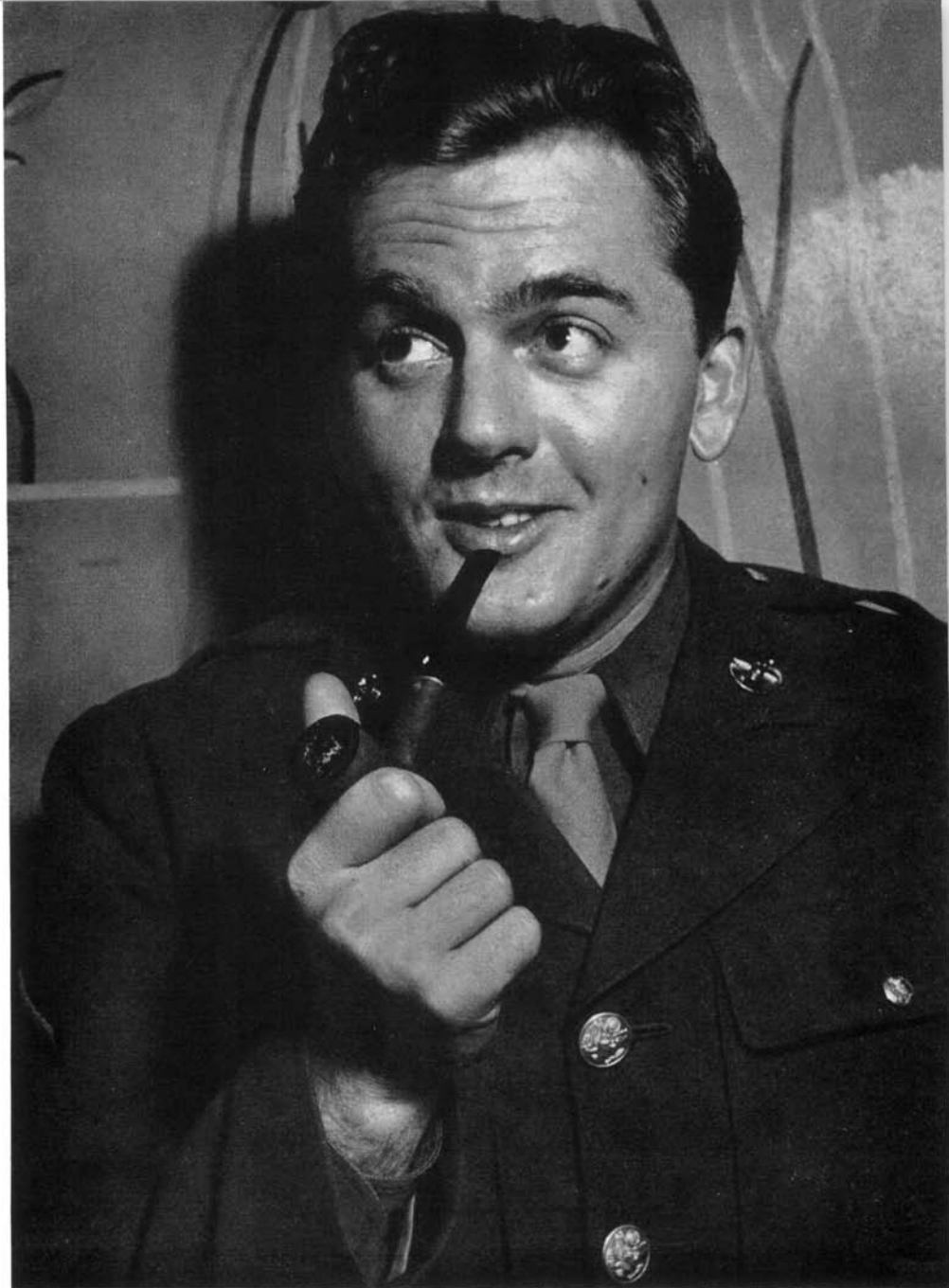
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